

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE

MARCH
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EDITED BY
LEONARD HUXLEY



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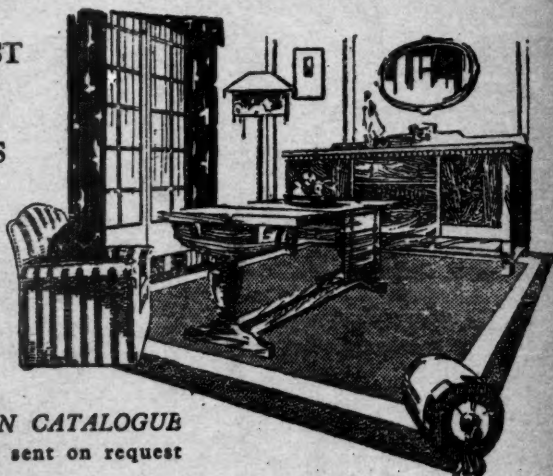


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ON SOLWAY BRIDGE.

BY G. E. MITTON.

CHAPTER X. (*continued*).

HE released his hand with a little shake, and laughed uneasily. 'You do not like my lovely face?' she continued earnestly, leaning forward. 'Ah, you do not know how I feel, now once again I am myself.'

He looked at her appraisingly: the wet, dark red mouth, the stickiness on the long eyelashes, the soft powder lying so evenly on the smooth skin. He ought not to like it, he knew that, but there was an odd suggestion of mystery and flattery in it; wonderful that anyone should have taken so much trouble to look 'lovely' in his eyes!

'I see—I know all!' she cried dramatically, clasping her fingers. 'You shall see!' and in one swift movement she had dived through that overfull room, between the laden bookcase and the round table, which left just a rim of space interlarded with chairs as obstacles, and disappeared. Not long after, she returned, and kneeling before him with her back to the fire sent a meaning glance deep into his eyes. It thrilled down his spine like fire.

'Now you see the ugly little me that you so much like,' she cried derisively.

In truth it was not an improvement. She was still clothed in the long, pale-yellow, artificial silk tunic she had selected, and this gave an added sallowness to the naturally yellow skin. In her excitement she had scrubbed rudely at the cosmetics, and her complexion was blotchy.

By this time he was on his guard. 'It is certainly better,' he said coldly. 'Now, Miss Melikoff, if you will sit in your chair, I should like to discuss the future with you. Mrs. Doig does not see her way to keeping you here after Monday.'

'I heard that,' she ejaculated shamelessly.

'She is a very determined woman, and even now that the cause of offence is removed, she will not go back on her word I think.'

She suggested to-day that the Girls' Friendly Society was the proper place for you, where you could remain until something is decided. I'm afraid it may only end in your being sent back to Russia.'

'I will do anything in England. I can teach; I taught in a school in Switzerland for a whole year. I went on with it for a long time because I wanted some money. I will not go back,' she added, with a finality that matched Mrs. Doig's.

'We might get a job for you here,' he said doubtfully. 'You speak English very well?'

'Yes, I always spoke it with my mother until she died just before I came away; that was why I came away, I could not longer live there with no one but the base-born.'

'Your mother was English, then?'

'Yes.'

'Can you speak French as well?'

'Mais c'est magnifique, la langue Française!' she cried, kindling with enthusiasm, and speaking those few words with an accent that even Bede recognised as the real thing.

'My sister-in-law wants a governess for her two little girls,' he explained. 'Up to quite recently they have had a nursery governess, but she has just been married to a schoolmaster.'

'A schoolmaster of the village?'

'No. It was a very good match for her; he owns his own school for little boys; he will get on; he is well connected.'

'Well connected, what is that?'

'It means having relations who are in a good position and able to help you—if they will.'

'And you—are you, too, well connected?'

'Hardly any relations at all—just one brother. It is his wife I am speaking of. I think she might be persuaded to give you a trial if you would like to teach.'

'“Like” and me are apart—oh, so long way,' with a gesticulation of her flexible hands. 'But if it is your brother—perhaps you go there sometimes—often?'

'I have been there for a week-end once or twice lately.'

'Is it far away?'

'Not very. In Northumberland, just over the border in England.'

'If you say I go, I will go.'

'I haven't said it, because it doesn't rest with me, but if you speak French well and are musical it might be wangled. They particularly want music for the elder child, Perdita.'

'I have just a small voice, but I play ravishingly,' she said without any false modesty.

Then he drew her on to speak of herself, and heard from her in detail all the sordid horrors of her life, the privations, the struggles, the constant terror of being pounced upon, and her means of escape, adroitly planned and carried out. Dainty in her ways, sybarite by preference, he concluded that there must be a fine steel frame beneath that delicate appearance.

When it struck ten he rose. 'Look here, you must go to bed.'

She drew nearer to him, and with a hand on his shoulder gazed challengingly at him. Like many reserved and fastidious men, Bede always shrank from personal contacts, but he did not resent that featherweight hand; it seemed so natural to her to use personal contacts, he could not consider it done of set purpose.

'You do really like the other face best?' she exclaimed suddenly. 'Some day I give that back to you, and now good-night.'

He would not own to it, but shook her off, laughing. Yet when she had left him he recognised with surprise that it was true. Like Mrs. Doig, he had a plain taste in faces, but he had to admit there was something exciting and intriguing in Loosha adorned, which was lacking in Loosha unadorned.

For the first time for nearly a year he did not that night give a thought to the vision which had so sorely troubled him. His mind was occupied by glancing colours from the many facets of this amazing creature, who had fallen out of the sea into his life. So full of light and vitality and grace was she who had emerged full-blown from the chrysalis he had rashly picked up at the harbour. A gorgeous butterfly alighting on his shoulder, and pertinaciously re-settling, whenever he hardened his heart to brush it away.

CHAPTER XI.

'An undigested soul,' said Perdita, solemnly, from her corner behind the drawing-room sofa, where she squatted on a black-and-gold pouf, to get more easily at the low bookshelf.

'Perdita! You there?' exclaimed her mother. 'Isn't it time for schoolroom tea?'

Then, as the oddness of the child's words penetrated her consciousness, she added, 'What a queer expression! Who is an undigested soul?'

'Not a real person, only in my mind.'

'What made you think of such a thing?'

'I don't know. Perhaps it was the still, small voice.'

Mrs. Delaval was not self-analytic, but for some time past she had been aware that much which she could not understand in this daughter of hers was as an open book to Bede. She had watched, not with jealousy, but with a queer ache of longing, the two together during Bede's week-end visits to Dalness.

Bede gave her a gentleness and understanding in small matters, which was as a cushion placed so as to relax the tension on all her nerves, but he did not give her the intimacy which Perdita drew out of him.

When her child spoke, Ina was holding in her hand a letter from him, which had come by that afternoon's post. It had brought before her vividly that streak of queerness in him which gave him savour. He wrote about a Russian girl in whom he was interested. She called herself a Princess, and it was possible she might be so; in all seriousness he suggested that she might do as a governess for his little nieces. A girl out of the void!

'She is a first-class musician,' Bede wrote. 'I am not speaking on my own authority, I should not dare, but Sir Eric Turnbull, whom I have got to know in the course of my work here, is a good judge. He arranged for her to play one evening before some picked men, including the cathedral organist; they are all full of admiration for her certainty of touch and execution. She also speaks French well, with an accent that makes me think it must be the real thing. At present she is housed by the G.F.S. people, but she is most anxious to earn her own living in any way. All that I ask is that you should allow her to come to stay with you for a few days, to see if there is any possibility of her filling the bill.'

Madman!

Nevertheless she, usually so candid, did not give her husband the letter when he presently came in for his tea. She began tactfully at the other end of the subject.

'It is so difficult to get anyone to fill dear little Miss Brown's place,' she said, as she attended to his wants. 'I have had many answers from the agency, but none of them is satisfactory. I want really good music for Perdita.'

A pause.

'You'll never get what you want,' said Cuthbert presently, as if he gave grudging attention. 'You'll just have to take one of

them, and in a year's time you'll be deploring her going away, just as you deplored the loss of Miss Brown.'

'I have heard this afternoon by chance of someone who might do,' she began tentatively. 'Her music is recommended by Sir Eric Turnbull.'

'I know that name; where does he hang out?' He glanced at the handwriting of the letter in her hand. 'Bede!' he exclaimed scornfully, and sat back, apparently taking no more interest in the subject.

'Yes, Bede writes about her. She is a Russian; her father was a prince killed by the Bolsheviks.'

'Just the sort of yarn Bede would swallow.'

'Is it no use writing to Sir Eric Turnbull then?'

'What has he to do with it?'

'I told you he is impressed by her wonderful music.'

'Seems a vague sort of story. Has she been governess anywhere? What are her references?'

'She taught for a year in a school in Switzerland where she had previously been educated,' said Ina.

But unpropitious as this beginning was, Loosha Melikoff did come to stay as a guest at Dalness so that she might be personally inspected, and Mrs. Delaval did write to the school she indicated, and received quite a satisfactory reference therefrom. After this Cuthbert, in masculine fashion, indicated that he 'washed his hands of the affair,' and left the full responsibility for engaging the alien as governess upon his wife.

Loosha meantime, with much perceptiveness, was modest and diffident in manner, and though she did not altogether drop the cosmetics, was so moderate with them that the children did not discover for a certainty that she used them until the third day, and Ina never noticed at all.

Bede brought her down—it was his third week-end at Dalness since Christmas—and returned to his work well pleased with himself. He was making good progress. His plan was to use as a foundation the most comprehensive of the old O.P. gazetteers he could find, and pasting the entries on slips, left plenty of space to work between them. He visited county headquarters, and interested the county officials in the scheme. He picked up much out-of-the-way information as to the origins of place-names, and of this he made a feature in the new volume.

When the Scottish holiday on the first Monday in May was

approaching, he thought he had earned a long week-end, and as by this time Loosha was well established at Dalness, he wrote asking if he might come as a guest.

He did the journey in his little car, and arriving in good time on the Saturday afternoon found Ina among her flowers in the garden. The children were out with their governess, and they could talk freely.

'Her music certainly is excellent,' said Ina, when the usual give and take had passed between them. 'Her French is well accented. For the rest it does not much matter. Miss Melikoff behaves so admirably that I foresee I shall have trouble with her some time. She has a temperament, and it will get away with her when the novelty has worn off. She does well enough with Podge for writing and reading, but of course Perdita needs a bit more, so we have arranged she should go for a couple of hours a day to the village school for arithmetic, geography and history.'

'Quite American.'

'It's good for her, and there is a capital head teacher, a girl who graduated at Oxford under the new scheme of the Board of Education; the Board pays half-fees on condition the scholar teaches for a term of years afterwards. They want to get a better class of teacher into the elementary schools.'

'That is very wise, and Perdita will get to know the children growing up to be her tenants as men and women; it will establish a real feudal feeling.'

Ina was bending, tying up a mass of delphinium that had been shattered by the rough winds, and she did not answer at once, then impulsively she broke out: 'Bede, you know that Perdita will never own this place?'

'Not own it? Why not?'

'You heard your father's will?'

'Certainly I heard it.'

'Then you must know that if we have no son, you are next in succession to Cuthbert?'

He was struck dumb with amazement, and for a moment his nervousness showed itself in the familiar expression of stubbornness. 'Are you sure of that, Ina?' he asked when he had a little recovered.

'Cuthbert himself told me.'

'But you may have a son,' he said, as one who sees relief in a by-path.

'We may. But you see I was right; in any case it will not go to Perdita.'

They strolled down the long closely-cut green path within the walled garden.

'I was always under the impression that the place went to Cuthbert's children before me,' he said at last.

'You are wrong.'

'I was upset at the time. I felt my father's death as a great shock. It was the first death I had personally known. I got here in time to see him in his coffin; it is an initiation; one has stood at the everlasting gate and caught a glimpse of unearthly majesty; one is never quite the same afterwards.'

Then the children were heard 'giving tongue,' as Bede said, and in a moment were upon them, followed by a very demure and discreet Loosha, who shook hands limply, and said that they had seen his car standing in the drive.

'I must go and put it by,' he said, and with much noise Perdita and Podge went too. Loosha disappeared, so that when Cuthbert came round the corner of the house a moment later, he found his wife alone.

She called to him a little breathlessly to come to her. She had to get it over. 'Oh, Cuthbert,' she said as he came near, 'I found that Bede knew nothing about the succession to this place, so I told him——'

'Of course you would,' he said, and turning on his heel left her.

It was the first time he had ever been flatly discourteous, and the measure of it was the measure of his dislike of Bede. She felt herself denounced in those four words as what the schoolroom calls 'a blab.' Behind that was another implication; it was as if her husband had accused her of undue interest in his younger brother. Was it true? She stood there questioning herself. Why was it so easy to say things to Bede and so difficult to say them to Cuthbert? Why was it that this young brother-in-law whom she had known so short a time had poured an added warmth and meaning into her life? Then the truth was revealed to her, as it sometimes comes bare and naked at the most inopportune moments. Standing there on the terrace, just before going in to make the tea, on a sunny afternoon with all her world in order, and no great storm shaking the earth, she knew that she had married a wooden man, a 'Robot,' and that what he said and did was of no consequence to her for ever more.

After tea, Miss Melikoff, as she had asked to be called, came down with the two children, who, free for an hour to do as they pleased, soon raced off down the garden.

'They have gone to see the tortoise ; it has come awake again,' said Loosha to Bede, who was standing in the hall, and as she went out after them, she cast a look back over her shoulder.

He waited for a moment to see if Ina was going to come out of the drawing-room, and as she did not he followed the lure. He had only turned the first bend of the path, just out of sight of the house, when he met Loosha coming toward him. Her demureness had fallen from her, and she greeted him with astonishing candour. 'I thought you weren't coming,' she cooed in seductive tones that embarrassed him considerably.

'You wanted me to come?' he stammered stupidly.

'Didn't you see it in my eye?' she retorted, drawing very close to him, with one finger-tip pressed into the corner of her eye. 'Oh la, la, but you are not so stupid as you seem.' Her other hand searched the pocket of his jacket, and extracted his cigarette case. Selecting one, she caught at his hand, and held his cigarette against hers to light it.

'Mrs. Delaval is very good ; she does not look down her nose when I smoke in the evening, but she says she prefer not in the schoolroom ; that is all right, quite conformable. Ah, come quick, the shrubbery ! The children return, and just for one little while I am to be myself.'

Bede entered into her mood readily, and they got within the rustic gate, and out of sight among the trees of the Long Walk before the children, with shrieks of delight, carried their tortoise, which had emerged from some hidden hole, after recovering from its winter sleep, back to the house.

'Very good I have been,' said Loosha, swinging along in a sort of rhythmic step beside him. 'Very good and very dull. I mark what they are like, and I too become like them. It is only for a time, I say to myself. Perhaps I too, like the little governess, shall be so fortunate as to marry a schoolmaster.' She emphasised the point of this by a flashing sidelong look. Then she pirouetted, and began to sing. 'I have only a small voice,' she said, 'but my music you shall hear ; it runs out of my finger-tips. To-night you shall hear. Even that oh-so-much-British man he listen, and Madam she does not play, so I may play as I will, and not be across her. Now speak, speak !'

She seized his arm, and walked beside him, pretending to stride to keep step. He shook himself free. 'You say my brother is dull,' he said, 'and my sister. I too am a dull man.'

'Ah, but you laugh when you say that; I see the little laugh trying to run out of the corner of your mouth. No, you are not dull, not to me, your little Loosha, whom you pulled from out the great sea.'

'What imagination you have!'

'My imagination is of poetry and love, and many other curious things. I see them coming far off. Do you not see them?'

He shook his head, but he was smiling.

'You are a mad girl,' he said. 'Who would think you were the demure little mouse you appeared in the drawing-room?'

A peal of merriment shook her. 'I see you watch me.'

'Pooh, I never looked at you.'

'I am looking at you now.' Indeed she was, with that mystery underlying her eyes which assuredly was not to be found in her soul, but he would not respond.

'It is best that way,' she went on, unabashed by the failure of her attempt. 'Looks that are shown to all the world—pouf, it is nothing! But the looks from me to you and you to me, and no one to see—they mean——?'

She had hold of his arm again, and was craning round to see his face. Imperturbably he again released himself, and shaking his cigarette stub out of its holder lit another cigarette. It was perhaps by instinct he kept that cigarette alight, for he had as yet no sense of impending danger; he was enjoying this new and piquant game, and he thought Loosha more daring and delightfully original than any girl he had ever conceived.

However, all he asked, soberly, was: 'When must you be back at the house?'

'Perhaps six. I give Podge a little lesson on the piano. I am with them all the time; we go for a walk—oh so proper—and I listen to the little birds and they tell me what they are, and I say small things to please them, and make them like me, but Perdita, she look at me never quite certain, but always I can get her excited by talking about music, and then her soul is quiet, and she thinks no more of me, but only of the music I make.'

It was good music she 'made'; even Cuthbert condescended to sit and listen to it in the drawing-room after dinner that evening.

The grand piano had been tuned and put in order for the new executant, and she surpassed herself as her flexible, strong fingers picked out the keys and glided from one to another, too fast to be followed.

She played Brahms and Tchaikowsky, and Bede stood behind her, and turned the pages whenever the sleek black head bowed on its slender brown neck to signify it was time, for he could not read the music. His face was in shadow above the circles of light cast by the shaded electric lamps, and Ina, sitting in a long chair a little way off, could only see it when he bent forward with his eyes fixed on the page. Cuthbert sat at right angles to her, so without turning she could see him too—a fine man, with a far more regular profile than his brother's, but set and wooden, without variation.

She knew now that she had bartered the most glorious possibility of life for material independence; yet, like many women, she had done it ignorantly; the knowledge had come upon her suddenly; she could have said with the man in the Bible, in the simplest language, 'Whereas I was blind, now I see.' That vision had opened up so much to her that she felt she was able to think for the first time in her life, whereas in reality she was only beginning to feel—quite a different thing.

The sum of all the possibilities—that was the glorious being one never became.

Now it was too late—all too late; and not one door only but a dozen doors barred the way.

At that moment Bede left his stand behind the piano, and crossing the room went softly out and up the staircase. As he had known, there, crouched down against the banisters, in flannel-ette pyjamas, was Perdita. She did not turn or move as he neared her; her little nut-like head was wedged so tightly against the uprights it seemed as if she had tried to thrust it through. But when he bent over her she gave an exclamation of stifled pain, and sprang to his arms, where he held her close, as, seating himself on the step, he kissed her again and again.

'Why have you been so unkind to me this evening, Perdita,' he asked. 'I searched for you everywhere before dinner——'

'I saw you,' in a muffled voice.

'You did? Where were you?'

'In the big fork of the beech tree.'

'Why didn't you come when I called, then?'

A convulsive movement which drew him even closer, but no answer.

'Perdita, I love you, and I have so few people to love ; if you are unkind to me you will break my heart.'

A satisfied wriggle, most expressive.

'You would like to break my heart ?'

'No, but I would like to know that only I *could* break it.'

'Ah !' He thought upon that, then he laughed.

'It's very nearly that,' he said at length.

The music had come up to them through the heavy drawing-room door, and now a grand passage from Tchaikowsky floated around them. 'Listen,' said Perdita. 'Music is best when you are away from it a little ; all the underneath part, which is the real part, comes clearly to you then, but if you are too near, the top part is too noisy.'

'Like our bodies and souls.'

'Yes, you do always understand, Uncle Bede ; it is our bodies which are noisy, and the soul no one listens to.'

'Your soul is quiet now ?' He raised her thin little face and kissed her on the lips. Her eyes filled with tears—and Perdita rarely cried—but she only said, 'Carry me to bed.'

And so he did.

CHAPTER XII.

THE party, except Podge, went the next morning to the little church which stood behind the village overlooking the sea.

They walked through the lanes and by the country roads ; the day was fine, with high scudding clouds in a blue sky, and the spring growth in field and hedgerow was making its gaiety felt. But it was not the riotous growth of favoured parts in the south, where the hedgerows, rising high, topple over in a profusion of pink roses and honeysuckle like many-coloured foam. These northern coast hedges were substantial, made for the most part of hawthorn, strong enough to stand the east winds, or severe, sharp blackthorn which flowered early, defying them with its white spray. The few wild roses were treasures like jewels separately set, and of honeysuckle there was none. Yet such as the country was, with its fine green sweeping hillsides, and its heavy foliaged sycamores, which alone seemed able to stand singly in full growth in the open, Bede loved it, and to-day his eyes roamed over it,

searching the dark woods clustered in the hollows with a new kindliness, for he still had a lien upon it.

To anyone less impressionable than he, the idea that he was in a problematical succession to Dalness would have made little difference, but to him it made all the difference, for it indicated that his father had recognised him and put him in his proper place as a male, not regarding him as so insignificant as to be overlooked altogether. He had not said a word to his brother of this enlightenment; indeed it would have caused him an agony of embarrassment had Cuthbert referred to it. This he need not have feared: Cuthbert's mind was filled with his own schemes and had no room for his brother.

The post did not come in until late on Monday morning; breakfast was already finished, and Bede was alone in the hall, when Annie, the waiting-maid, handed him some letters. They had been directed and re-directed, and as he sat down on the wide stone steps of the front door, overlooking the terrace, to read them, he saw that one at least had been originally addressed to his old lodgings in Fulham, long since abandoned.

The first he opened had been sent to the London office, thence to Edinburgh, and having apparently just missed him there, had followed him, conscientiously re-addressed by Mrs. Doig.

It was from a firm of London solicitors, Messrs. Handling, Burse & Co., and informed him that their late client, Robert Morris, had left him a bequest of all the prehistoric flints collected in his lifetime. The only condition was that they should not be given to the nation.

Bede's surprise was so great that he gaped at the paper, and mechanically read it again. Then he looked at the rest of the letters, and selected the one that had been first addressed to his old lodgings. It was from the nurse, Selina Borrick, and was ill-written and ill-expressed, as lack of education often comes more strongly out on paper than in speech.

When he had finished reading it, he had gathered a good deal of information. Mr. Morris had insisted on going fishing, as he had said he would. He had been taken up above Walton with his punt, and Miss Borrick had gone with him, expostulating. In the afternoon a violent thunderstorm had broken over them, and the rain, pouring down in torrents, had almost swamped the punt; a passing launch had rescued them, but not before the old man was absolutely soaked to the skin. They got him home and put

him to bed, but he never rallied, and died of bronchial pneumonia in a few days. On the second day Miss Borrick had wired to the address at Bede's lodgings, which was all she could find, but had had no reply; she now wrote to tell him that the end had come early on Tuesday morning and that the funeral was fixed for Friday—that Friday which had come and gone two days ago! It was after the funeral that the solicitor had written, having discovered the Hanaper office address.

Bede now turned over the doubled sheet he held in his hand from the firm, and read on the back of it, 'Miss Selina Borrick is residuary legatee and sole executrix; she is anxious that the collection inherited by you should be removed as soon as possible, because she does not intend to keep on the house; we have not yet ascertained what valuation is put upon the collection for probate.'

At that moment voices sounded in the hall, and Bede, in the tumult of thought aroused within him, felt unable to face anyone; he sprang to his feet and fled for the shelter of the shrubbery, where he should be undisturbed.

It was overwhelming!

Without knowing what he did he plunged forward through some small scrub to one of the great beeches, which in this sheltered part grew finely at intervals along the fence separating shrubbery from paddock. Pressing his forehead against the cool, smooth grey bark, he tried to regain control of himself.

No other fact possessed his mind at the moment except that another of that little band of four, who had been on the bridge in his vision, was dead within the year, and that his death had been due to water.

He saw again, with a vividness that made it real, the grey flowing flood of the Thames as he had seen it earlier in the year, and it seemed to him that even then there had been a presage of evil in it to which he had deliberately shut his ears.

If his cousin had died, as a man of eighty-eight might, in his bed, without warning or apparent cause, this news would not have been so utterly smashing, but that he had died because he had been overtaken by grey water, which fell upon him from above and welled up and swelled around him—there lay the awful significance. Selina Borrick's ill-framed sentences had brought before the recipient pictorially that tragedy in which he felt himself to be the murderer. He could see that rotund little figure, with its

pathetically small legs and grand head, lying in the bottom of the punt and actually wallowing in the water. There was nothing comic to him in this apparition, he was far past any appreciation of the comic. No reflection that here was a man of great age, who, flatly against the advice of his nurse, had chosen to take risks that might well have ended fatally for one much younger, solaced him. If this had been the first case of the kind he might have sucked what consolation he could from these ideas, but it was the second.

Here was a fourth of the band gone, and both deaths connected with water. The year since he had had that ghastly vision had not yet quite completed its loop before it had been twice fulfilled.

Bitterly he regretted that he had not had more strength of mind on that fatal day, and refused to allow himself to be sucked down into the nowhere. If he had fought as he would have fought now, he must have been able to free his feet from the slime, and even have stayed his course on that awful descent and so struggled up and out. If he had done this, would nothing have happened? Would Carrie still be alive? That, he could not wish, and back he came again in that endless treadmill of the mind round to the fact that he had profited by his descent into the pit; that he would not have been as he now was, a different man, if the fruit of it had not come into his hand.

At any rate he was to make no profit by his cousin's death; that was satisfactory; Selina Borrick would have been petrified by astonishment could she have known that, far from cursing her as she anticipated, this young man was blessing her.

Now that Bede's seething brain was settling down a little, he was able to smile grimly at the terms of the bequest. The one chance of getting rid of the collection was barred to him; but for that he would immediately have made it over to the nation in his cousin's name, to be called the 'Morris Collection,' and so been well quit of it. But that was not to be allowed, and he would not only have to pay probate, but to make arrangements to have it removed at once somewhere or other.

He recalled with a groan the endless glass-topped cabinets filled with sliding shelves that he had seen, and went on further to that second batch of curios housed in the topmost storey, which he had not seen. What could he do with the things? This divergence of thought, stilling him, helped to give him again the

mastery of himself, and he faced the other, the vital question, more soberly.

Was he only a fool, making much of nothing? Or was there in reality an Evil Thing which chuckled over him as over a fish caught in the net and ready for the frying-pan?

He longed to go to the only straightforward, sanely-balanced woman he knew, and lay the case before her in its entirety, receiving her judgment, but how could he, when she herself—Ina—was one of the doomed band?

He thought of Mr. Hatherton as a confidant, but he believed that the clergyman's mind was quite incapable of receiving a true impression from anything so mystical and intangible as he had to describe, therefore his advice, even if given, would be as worthless as the valuation of colours by a colour-blind man. Or old Matilda? She would understand, but what would she say? He feared that her ideas would only confirm his own worst presentiment. She was likely to be warped by her temperament in the opposite direction from Mr. Hatherton.

Then he tried to persuade himself that, as he had told no one of the vision, the whole thing existed only in his own imagination, and if he, by sane and strenuous thinking, could rid himself of it, these deaths would have no significance at all. But that was just what he could not do.

He walked numberless times quickly up and down, up and down, the long, straight piece of the shrubbery called 'The Runner's Mile'—though it was nothing like a mile in length—and finally, having recovered the mastery of himself, he returned to the house in time for lunch. That afternoon there was to be a great expedition to Holy Island. The children had seen it often from afar, but had never been across, and it was a long-promised treat. Even Cuthbert was going.

This must be faced somehow, Bede thought; but when he got away by himself to his Edinburgh quarters there would be time enough to meditate. In the meantime there was nothing he could do; the old man was buried. He could write to Selina Borrick and the lawyers, expressing conventional sorrow, but he had not the ghost of an idea as to how he should 'instruct' the latter.

As he emerged from the shrub-enclosed walk, he stood still for a moment and a quiver ran over him; from here he could see the front door steps. Ina was standing on them alone, clearly outlined against the grey stone. He saw her suddenly as the next victim,

and the constriction that tightened his heart made him quiver in pain. Carrie was gone and Robert Morris was gone. Ina was predestined to the same fate, and he would be her murderer. If indeed this menace became actual fact, he would blow out his brains and go to the devil at once, sooner than endure the years of tension that would follow.

Ina turned to him as he neared her, and her eyes searched his face. She saw his unnatural pallor and the drawn look of pain which had changed him in an hour. 'Are you ill, Bede?' she asked solicitously.

'Not very well. I've had rather a shock. Our old cousin, Robert Morris, is dead.'

She looked her mild surprise. 'Were you very fond of him?'

'I can't say that exactly, but I went down to see him at Kingston not so long ago. He was quite a decent old boy, and now to hear he is not only dead but buried——' Yes, he must make the most of that to account for the trouble that he was in.

'Buried?'

'Yes, the nurse who looked after him wrote to me to tell me he died last Tuesday and was to be buried on Friday, but unfortunately she addressed it to my old digs in London, and there has been delay, so I hear in another letter from a firm of solicitors that he has actually been buried.'

Ina was thinking how extraordinarily sensitive he was. His face had changed in expression since breakfast time, yet this Mr. Morris had been a very old man surely—how odd his death should have produced such an effect! No wonder Bede and Cuthbert had never understood one another! The irony of it! That one brother should have absorbed all the sensibility of the family so that life to him must be perpetual pain, and the other practically none. After all, perhaps it was better to be the wife of such a man as Cuthbert, than such a man as this, who must inevitably suffer.

At that moment Cuthbert joined them, and Bede repeated his news.

Cuthbert looked interested. 'Has he left you anything?' was his first question.

'His collection of flints and prehistoric things.'

'What?'

Cuthbert gave a ribald shout.

Bede smiled too. 'It's due to my cursed habit of acting too

well,' he said. 'I suppose I made him think I really liked the things.'

'But what can you do with them?' Ina asked. 'Give them to some museum?'

'Who's got what money there is?' said her husband.

'The nurse who looked after him.'

'You went down there early in the year, and saw her?'

'Yes.'

'Didn't you gather what was going on and put a stop to it?'

'I thought her manner to him much too familiar, but what could I do?'

'Whooo!' It was a long-drawn snort of contempt.

'Well, what are you going to do with your bequest?' asked Ina quickly, knowing that the sneer would wound.

'I can't give it to the nation, he's barred that. Had a down on the British Museum; the officials hadn't kowtowed to him enough or something. So they're not to have it.'

'Not to have it given? But isn't it worth something? Won't they buy it?'

He glanced at her gratefully. 'Capital! I never thought of that.'

'I don't suppose you'll get much out of it, but it would pay expenses,' she added as they went into lunch.

The afternoon, after wavering this way and that, turned out definitely fine.

They were all to go in the big car, and had to leave at a special time in order to get to Beal for low tide; from there they had to hire horse-drawn vehicles from the inn to cross over the three miles of wet sand uncovered by the retreating tide, for the tyres of the car could not be exposed to the action of the salt water. Moreover, this part of the journey was the most thrilling excitement to the children, who looked on horse-drawn conveyances as the same in rarity as an earlier generation would have considered cars.

The children almost choked with excitement when they were packed into the dog-carts awaiting them on the margin of the sand, Miss Melikoff with Podge in front beside the driver, Bede and Perdita hanging on behind, in the first one; Ina in front, with Cuthbert behind, in the second. Perdita stood up directly they started, and almost fell straight off into a great pool, as the wheels dipped in the soft sand. Bede caught her round her thin body, as she waved her arms and chanted wildly:

'For with the flow and ebb, the style
Varies from continent to isle ;
Dry-shod o'er sands twice every day
The pilgrims to the shrine find way.'

'Shut up,' said the grinning Podge, looking back. 'You're spoiling it all ; I can't enjoy meself.'

Clip-clop, clip-clop, went the heavy-footed horse through the shallows, sending the water this way and that, as it ran in ripples before the wind.

But the crown of excitement was reached in passing the large tanks standing on high legs as a refuge for those caught by the tide.

The words 'Fear Not' and 'Cheer Up' marked in huge and rudely-fashioned letters on the sides could be seen a mile off, and Perdita shrieked them out, while Podge laboriously spelled them at the top of her voice. Even Bede cast from him his cloak of apprehension ; there, with these two dear infants, so exuberant in their joy of living.

'How I would love to be caught by the tide !' exclaimed Perdita, bringing up a sigh of longing from her very toes. 'It would be so lovely, with the wind sighing round, and leagues of water.'

'I don't think it would be so very lovely to be in one of those cold, draughty places for six hours on end,' said Bede.

'But with you—and Podge—perhaps——' Then she wriggled close to him, and, with a naughty light in her eyes, whispered very low : 'Not anyone else.'

It struck him then, and was to strike him still more forcibly later, that the child and the young girl were in mortal antagonism, an antagonism inbred and wholly instinctive, but so strong that no amount of training or discipline could overcome it. Only the bond of that music which both loved could for the moment lull that watchful inherent enmity.

They splashed through the ancient river Lindis, twice a day submerged beneath the floods of salt water, and at length neared the goal.

The houses grouped together on the island form a respectable little village. After making arrangements for returning to the inn for an early tea, the party scattered on arrival to see the sights and scramble about. While the children, bare-headed and bare-footed, went with Loosha and Bede to visit the castle perched on its knob, looked through the glasses at the uptilted Farne Islands

in their queer slab formation, and rambled about the ruined abbey, Cuthbert and Ina, who had often seen these things, strolled together a little behind, or sat on broken walls and talked.

For once Cuthbert had a great deal to say. He began to tell his story directly they were entirely alone.

'I'm thinking of going in for a great venture,' he began, lighting his pipe, and looking out to sea with his hard grey-blue eyes.

'You!' exclaimed Ina. It was the last thing she had ever expected of him, and it surprised her no less than his confidence, for he was a man who never cared to know the opinions of another unless they were those of a hired expert.

'I've thought a great deal about it,' he went on. 'You know that my main object in life is to secure you and the children in a position equally as good as now, if anything happened to me.'

'But I may die first!' An impulse of friendliness made her lay her hand on his knee as she spoke.

'It's possible, of course, but the other is just as likely. After my illness early in the year this idea was more present to my mind than ever before.'

'Really, Cuthbert? I never knew you thought again about it.'

'Well, you see, I do think of things sometimes, even I. Before that, I had a possible opening for greatly increasing my means apart from the estate, which, as you well know, goes from our children. Now that you have made sure that Bede is aware of that fact, I have decided to act. You know Bickley, near the Tyne?'

'You mean that outlying bit of land in the midst of collieries?'

'Yes, in the middle of the Bickley district. It's never been any use, and there is apparently no coal in it as I had once hoped there might be. Harry Hall's Bickley Colliery is close alongside, and he is considering amalgamation with two others, which would make a really large concern; if they don't do something to reduce expenses they'll have to close down. Now my land lies between them and the river, and the proposition is, that a canal should be cut to join an existing canal which runs parallel to the river a bit inland. I can't sell the land, as it forms part of the estate. My father bought it as a speculation in the boom days, confident that coal would be found there, but nowadays, when collieries don't pay, it would hardly be worth while to sink a shaft even if it were found. I am getting up a company to make a canal. When it is in use, it will be a means of connection between this new

combine, and not only that, but other concerns too. The wayleaves would bring in good dividends. If it were successful I could get from it an income which would, in a very few years, replace the capital I sink in it, and from that time on it would be pure profit. But to get that revenue I shall have to hold most of the shares myself. I'm putting it very simply, Ina, and not going into technical details, though with your brain you could understand easily enough if you wanted to.'

'Thank you,' she laughed. 'When you do pay me a rare compliment you mean it, don't you?'

He disregarded that. 'We should have to obtain Parliamentary sanction for the scheme,' he went on seriously. 'But amalgamation is in the air; many M.P.'s seem to look on it as a panacea for all the ills of the coal trade. We should make play with the amalgamation scheme in connection with this; Hall is backing me for all he's worth, so I don't anticipate any difficulty there. Anything which is put forward as a means of eventually lowering costs in coal-getting is bait enough for the parliamentary mind at this juncture.'

'But, Cuthbert, if, as you started by saying, anything happened to you, wouldn't the income from the wayleaves come to Bede?'

'You've put your finger on the spot. They would.'

'You'll have to get his sanction for this proposal then?'

His face darkened. 'That I shall not do,' he said obstinately. 'Moreover, by the terms of the will I need not. I can improve or develop the property to any extent I please. It's true that if I petered out, all I put into it would be accounted to estate development.'

'Isn't it risky, then?'

'No. Speaking reasonably, there is no more chance of my dying than any other healthy man of middle age. The insurance companies reckon that, say for the next three years, is practically nil. By the end of that time I should have got back my capital. From then on every penny of profit will go to a new capital account in your name.'

Ina looked round; she would have liked to have kissed him for this proof of forethought, and partly also as a slight salve to her own conscience, but she knew he would have hated it here in the open, even though no one was in sight, so she patted his arm and said again, 'Thank you.'

A few minutes later Perdita ran toward them.

'Father,' she said rather timidly, for she rarely addressed him voluntarily. 'This is your island, because it's Cuthbert's.'

'You think I'm like Cuthbert?'

She smiled queerly. 'He was a saint.'

'He was a strong man.'

'A strong man, *but* good,' Perdita insisted. 'And he liked being alone, and living with all the sea-birds and spray, and having nothing much to eat.'

'Your ideas of the old monks don't tally with mine; they did themselves jolly well.'

Meantime, for the first time that day, Bede and Loosha were alone. Podge sat on a big stone not far off, kicking her legs and crooning to herself, while they leaned side by side against a low wall within the ruined nave of the abbey.

'I adore Podge,' said Loosha. 'I could kiss and cuddle her all day. But Perdita—that child—how she stick to us, never once to-day has she left off following us about.'

'Why should she not?'

'I think,' she said slyly, peeping at him under her eyelashes, 'she knows about you and me.'

'What is it she knows?' he asked imperturbably.

'That you like me—is it true?' she asked archly.

'Of course I like you,' he replied, with a coolness that provoked her, as he had intended it should. She made a *moue*, and would have sprung away, but he caught her arm and drew her back.

'No, no, Princess,' he said in a softer tone. 'Don't be angry with me. I have had many things to worry me to-day.'

'If you call me that, I will do anything for you. No one else calls me Princess. It is just your name. Shall it be?'

'Yes, if you like.'

'I do like. It is a secret then between me and you?' She glanced sideways up at him. 'We tell none, and then, after a time, eh? All the world shall know.'

'What shall they know?' he asked incautiously.

'That I shall be your little wife.'

(To be continued.)

'LOOKING ON HELPS.'

BY DAME HENRIETTA BARNETT, D.B.E.

THE melodious voice of the speaker who, a few Sundays ago, asked for money for King Edward's Hospital Fund, told how a celebrated doctor when taking King Edward (who was then the Prince of Wales) round a hospital had said to him :

'All these people, sir, are suffering from diseases which are preventable.' On which the Prince had replied :

'Then why the devil have you not prevented them ?'

Something like fifty years ago a little boy of six, who is now a distinguished judge, stood by a table watching his sisters busy preparing for some festivity.

'How idle you are !' said one of his elder sisters. 'Can't you do something to help ?'

A long pause, and then he looked up at his governess and said : 'I am helping, aren't I ? Looking on helps.'

As I have lived with parsons nearly all my life, and have many friends among them, from archbishops to deacons, I know the value they attach to an appropriate text for a sermon, so I have chosen two for this article :

'Why the devil have you not prevented them ?'

'Looking on helps.'

Happily everyone now knows of the plan of a richer neighbourhood adopting a poorer one, and of the help that can be systematically given with organised effort by one town protecting a district which, by an economic war or an unanticipated misfortune, has 'fallen by the way.' Financial aid by those who know the circumstances of the locality and the character of individuals can be of indescribable value, and it is only a sad, a very sad experience extending over many years which compels me to record that an outburst of charity is often disastrous in its consequences, both to those who give and to those who receive. The first, either verbally or silently, often assume that through their cheque-books they have done all that is required of them, and therefore abstain with reposing consciences from more thorough effort. This is a disastrous consequence of giving, for inactive souls are unhealthy, but it is as

nothing in comparison to the injury often done to those who receive alms distributed, as they must be in times of emergency, on consequences, not causes, on circumstances and not character.

The Miners' Fund is an unintentional advertisement of the failure of the Government to realise an important and imminent economic crisis, and of a yet further failure to meet the difficulty when realised, by offering nothing more than money, which will probably tend to sap those subtle forces of independence and self-respecting pride on which our sturdy English character is founded.

Foresight would have planned to meet the difficulty by emigration and migration, or by relief works on unremunerative but desirable projects, such as afforestation, reclamation of land, removal of dangerous rocks, abolition of or tidying up of trade refuse dumps, creation of serviceable breakwaters, deepening of harbours, or provision of shelters for small coasting ships. The laying out of down or waste land near large towns for playing fields, the planting of road trees, the repairing of decaying houses, the provision of more roads, the widening of esplanades, the enlarging of drains, and many other similar jobs might have been undertaken, but even if none of them commended themselves to 'them that governs us,' at least every town or village could have employed some men to sweep and clean and thereby establish a higher standard of public hygiene. I realise that the creation of a centre for unremunerative industry would have been costly, but not too costly, for it can be said of a nation or a class or a trade: 'What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' Most of us who have seen the effect of the dole or out-relief or a charitable outburst, can tell of the pain of witnessing the slow decay of effort, the gradual loosening of the sense of responsibility, and the change from pride in work to distaste for work. The soul can shrivel while the body fattens.

But in spite of spasmodic sympathetic talk from politicians, nothing adequate was attempted until the sensational press screamed, and then the response of the Government is to hand over the people's money without retaining official administration or departmental control.

To have left the miners to their fate without *adequate* forethought for remedies on a scale large enough to be effective is sufficiently glaring to awaken thought in everyone's mind, but apart from this object lesson are not the same social crimes being

committed in every large town and many industrial centres where a disgraceful state has existed for years and no satisfactory effort has been made to remedy it ?

Some of the reasons why such needed reforms have not been undertaken is because the public don't care about these evils, and they do not care because they do not know enough about iniquitous conditions. If they knew they would care, and if they cared they would demand changes and suggest improvements. Then if the Government, the municipalities, the press believed that the electors cared and that their actions were being scrutinised, they would be more alert. 'Looking on helps.' It may be said that philanthropic reports give information of the sufferings of the people or the social circumstances they endure, and for the reform of which their organisation exists. That is true, but one is apt to look askance at the statements made by philanthropists, who are tacitly accused of exaggeration in order to open widely the mouths of the money bags. Also everyone knows that imagination is anæmic in the English mind, and that most people have a family likeness to the Biblical Thomas who wanted to see and touch before he could realise.

There are many ways of learning civic facts, but each involves and should involve taking pains—two words which have slipped into casual use, but contain a fine idea, that of seeking sacrifice to obtain an end. To read long, detailed, and often complicated statistics, which are necessary if a grasp of any subject is to be obtained ; to listen to dull and wearisome debates when both sides of the matter are propounded with force if not forcibly ; to wade through law-court trials and Acts of Parliament to arrive at what is legally permissible or prohibited ; to scrutinise closely the sources of information, are each and all desirable methods of obtaining knowledge of other people's lives, but they should be supplements and not substitutes for actual personal understanding gained by the individual gift of 'taking pains.'

The most effective method of obtaining the privilege of close acquaintance with 'all sorts and conditions of men' is to live among them, and this is now possible by the extension of residential settlements. Whereas in 1884, when my husband and I started Toynbee Hall, there was no centre where people of goodwill and cultivation could live and share the stinks, bear the noise, and tolerate the dirtiness which millions of their fellow townsmen endured, there are now in England forty-two residential settlements in London and provincial towns, besides a large number of

voluntary educational centres. In America the idea has been even more prolific, for it was only in 1889 that Miss Jane Addams, after visiting us in Whitechapel, founded in Chicago a wonderful community domicile of social service for laymen, and there are now more than 500 settlements, or, as they often call them, 'neighbourhood houses,' in the United States.

To live among the dispossessed is the best method of knowing them and the circumstances of their lives. Indeed, so important does the first-hand knowledge seem to Sir Wyndham Deedes and Mr. Mallon, the respective Senior Residents of Oxford House, Bethnal Green and Toynbee Hall, Whitechapel, that to those who cannot come into residence they frequently offer the advantages of a Study Week when, for a short period, the visitors go through a course of intensive study on subjects which range from 'Migration within the Empire' to the 'Functions of Economic Analysis'; from 'Food Values' to 'Factory Laws'; from 'Milk in Schools' to 'Garden Cities'; from 'Holiday Camps' to the 'Psychology of the Criminal.' Writing on this need of first-hand knowledge, Sir Wyndham Deedes says :

'At present there are valuable opportunities for Settlements to educate public opinion on social problems, on which there is a tremendous misrepresentation of facts.'

Not content with offering the knowledge to be obtained in the lecture hall, the visitors are taken to see centres of night industry such as Billingsgate, the docks, Covent Garden, newspaper offices; or the evening haunts of the destitute on the Embankment or in the casual wards. The groups are kept small so as to be inconspicuous, and during one of the recent bitter nights a party of Oxford undergraduates could have been seen ending up their night's sightseeing with hot coffee and hotter chestnuts from the street stalls which were supplying the fish porters.

It is not given, though, to everyone to be able to leave their homes and enjoy the hospitality of a University Settlement, or to breathe an atmosphere which is redolent of experience and goodwill. To those who are not qualified for this privilege I would suggest that they form themselves into an Association, select a district in that part of their town where the poorest live, and concentrate their individual and collective energies on learning the facts. From such knowledge reform would follow. For instance, those of us who have seen overcrowding, and its terrible results on character and conduct.

cannot rest content in our pleasant abodes and leave people in homes such as are here described :

'One room 9 ft. square. Terrible condition. Man, wife, and five children in one room. . . . Two bedrooms and one small living room, dirty and very damp. . . . Man, wife, and five children in one room. Man and wife in another room. T.B. man sleeping in kitchen. . . . There is a dust yard in this street ; in the summer the place is infested with swarms of flies, and the rats make it difficult to use the downstairs rooms.

'Father, mother, and five children all in one front room upstairs. The room is a fair size, but as it has to contain all the furniture of the house, there is not much space for the children. There is *one* large bed in which the whole family of seven have to sleep !—also a table, chest of drawers, and chairs. The home is not very clean, although Mrs. Y. really tries very hard to keep it so. She keeps the children fairly clean and tidy, but does not seem very strong herself.'

These are selections from a large number of cases drawn from different parts of South and East London, and in many parts of provincial towns there are similar iniquitous arrangements.

In case it should be thought that these are exceptional instances it may be as well to quote from a booklet published by the Joint Housing Committee of the London Council of Social Service and the Mansion House Council of Health and Housing :

'The Report declares that a large proportion of the population continues to live in appalling conditions of overcrowding. At the date of the last Census 904,923 persons were housed in Greater London at the rate of more than two persons to a room, and of these, 78,759 persons were housed at the rate of three persons to a room. . . . In addition to recognised unhealthy areas large numbers of dwellings unfit for habitation exist in almost every borough in London. The most unhealthy conditions are to be found in basement dwellings. . . .'

Valuable suggestions are offered for immediate action and complaint made that 'The time taken in carrying out slum clearance schemes is excessive, and should be shortened.'

There is much information available on housing, and a very large number of earnest men and women are at work on it, but they would all agree that their hands would be strengthened by a greater force of public opinion : 'looking on helps.'

Some people say that it is useless to take families who have lived

under such conditions and place them in garden cities or model villages, but long and wide experience enables me to contradict those pessimists, and I am glad to be able to record that Mr. Baldwin agrees with me. Speaking in Scotland, he said :

'I rejoice to think that, although much has been said about the dwellers in slums making the slums, and about the slum mind, in this City of Glasgow you have found in your rehousing that not more than 10 per cent. taken from slum areas have failed to respond to the better environment.'

I remember some sixty years ago contending with youthful vehemence with Miss Octavia Hill because she said that dirty, untidy people were not to be moved into the cleaner dwellings provided by Mr. Ruskin until they were themselves cleaner and tidier, whereas I held that it was not humanly possible to be clean and tidy when living under such degraded circumstances, and that they should be given the chance of change to help them. Miss Octavia was an heroic character, but she judged the powers of others by her own exceptional ones, whereas I, being less gifted, understood commonplace people better, and have with rejoicing seen the past inhabitants of slum homes radiantly happy in their prize gardens, and exuding contentment from tidy homes.

It is not in accordance with the English character to know of evils and not to try and cure them, and if such Associations as I suggest were created their influence would go far to push reforms. For instance, how many of us realise the difference between the standard of street cleanliness maintained in the West End of London and that which is counted good enough for the East End, or the frequency of brushing supposed to be needed for the business thoroughfares compared to what the back alleys and side streets obtain, though the fact that the population is more dense in the latter than in the former districts would point to the provisions being reversed.

'Do unto others as you would they should do unto you' may be put into another way and read : 'Demand for others what you would they should demand for you.' Rarely is this done, and again ignorance is the cause, and it is an ignorance which breeds insult.

'Do not fret, dear Dame,' has been often said to me ; 'the poor like those conditions, or in any case know nothing different.'

When I was young I used to think I should die from bursting with indignation, a complaint not registered by the British Medical

Council; but I am glad to say that I believe more people suffer from it now, and they would be even more numerous were not class barriers so high. The standard accepted by one set of people for another is one of the worst consequences of class divisions.

Let us imagine a group of men, not necessarily philanthropists, walking in the East End or some parts of South London with the idea that they would demand for others what they demand for themselves. Foremost among their responsibilities would be the children, and for them playing is essential.

In the Report of the National Playing Fields Council occur the following paragraphs :

'Our young people are continually being told to play and not to look on. There is a real irony in this when we think of the thousands and tens of thousands who have not grounds to play on. . . .'

'There was no more touching spectacle than children cooped up in hot yards adjoining the stuffy tenements in which they lived. . . .'

'English public schools had an average of one cricket field and football pitch for every thirty boys; the borough of Southwark had one acre, not of playing ground but open space, to 25,000 residents. . . .'

'Such a condition of things must tend to lower the physical and moral standards of city-bred folk and have an injurious effect upon the highest development of the parents of the next generation. . . .'

To play effectively space is needed, but it is not available when the streets, not having been town-planned, are already built up. So the best substitutes must be found. Why should the school playgrounds be kept closed excepting for the hours and days when the schools are open? The expense of longer hours for caretakers will be urged as a reason for excluding the children during the 'summer time' evenings and for all Saturdays and Sundays, and to that I would reply that if the walls were pulled down the public would act as chaperons, and the children gradually develop responsibility to defend a valued privilege. In some towns in America certain streets are barricaded against traffic for certain hours in the day and evening, which gives the children at least safety if nothing else.

'Please, sir, I can't play cricket here,' said a London boy on being taken into the country by the Children's Country Holiday Fund. 'There ain't no lamp-post 'ere.'

Does not that sentence call aloud for the provision of extensive areas for playing fields outside London, to which schools could be

taken out of school hours to have their health and characters built up by organised exercise ?

Still dominated by the principle of demanding for others what we wish them to demand for us, the walks may be continued.

'What an appalling smell comes from that huge factory ! Someone is disobeying the factory laws,' remarks one of the group. 'Imagine having that stink week in and week out in one's nostrils and throat !'

'I thought there were laws about smoke abatement, but just look at the volumes ejected from those chimneys,' someone will say not a quarter of a mile farther on, while if the walk is taken during an autumn or winter evening, a few strong words may be legitimately uttered, as the unwary visitor stumbles over kerbstones, or steps into puddles, or shuffles through dust mounds. But these small misfortunes (which have occurred owing to the inefficient back-street lighting) are as nothing compared to the larger evils of brutality and licence which darkness shields. It would be of interest to learn the proportion of street lamps per mile or per population in East, South, West, and North London. I read of one place where lights were seventy yards apart.

Among the impressions that will be gathered during the visitors' walks will undoubtedly be the realisation of the uniform ugliness that prevails. It seems to be accepted that the poor should be expected to live among what is dull and drear and depressing. Why ? Everyone loves what is pretty, even if the love is unexpressed, and most folk eagerly accept suggestions for its provisions. The late Mr. A. O. Greening of the Co-operative Seed Society, metamorphosed the entire neighbourhood of his business premises by 'One and All' penny packets, and something like forty years ago I began in Whitechapel a Window Box Association which has grown and grown until it now holds a show in the Temple Gardens. If beauty for others is demanded it will be obtained. Even to expect the best may be a hitherto unrecognised spiritual force. 'Looking on helps.'

It would not be fair to spend too much time in back streets and slum areas, for the huge blocks of dwellings that the County and Borough Councils have built must be seen, studied and understood, all the more because the policy, though discredited in some minds, is still being pursued. Very wonderfully have some of these palatial habitations been planned. Parlours, bedrooms, bathrooms, dust-shoots, cupboards have all been provided, and even automatic

lifts added, but those who built them have forgotten the difficulties of the mother who desires to keep a protecting eye on her children, their companions, games, and interests, and finds that living five to six stories high seriously militates against that daily duty.

It is to all who know about garden cities a continual surprise that the municipalities of large towns do not adopt the principle, and create centres of industrial dwellings some 20 to 25 miles from the business centres of great cities. Land would be cheaper, and so rents lower; health would be better, and so taxes for the maintenance of the sick or disabled would be smaller; space for gardens would be obtainable, and so the attractions of excitement and vice become less potent. The cost of time and labour in travelling by the bread-winner is often urged as a drawback, but factories and workshops would soon follow the housing provision for workers, and so there would arise a small town with varied interests, and a mixture of different classes of persons, with different standards of mental equipment, different experiences, different thoughts, different aspirations, sharing certain pleasures together, and, by sharing, learning the spiritual forces of good fellowship. The division of classes caused by ignorance is a deep and dynamic national danger.

In no other country in the world is so much done by the Government for the people as in England. I remember Monsieur Clemenceau during his visit to us in Whitechapel saying, in his forcible, cautious English: 'You build palaces and put the poor in them'; and then adding meditatively, 'it may commend indolence.'

This is not the place in which to prove that his word 'may' should be written 'does,' but whatever be the consequence of the spreading of mattresses on which the irresponsible wayfarer through life can safely fall, it is important that those who think should see workhouses, labour yards, infirmaries, asylums, police courts, prisons and other protective or remedial institutions which, as tax and rate payers, they support, and about which they should know so as to bear their responsibilities intelligently and conscientiously.

There can be but little doubt that if a group of men such as I have indicated deliberately 'took pains' to learn social facts they would urge reforms to ameliorate pain and to give pleasure, for to know and not to help is to take the sacraments of sorrow unworthily. So I can imagine opportunities being made to share talents, providing concerts, acting plays, organising country rambles, explaining pictures in galleries or museums, discussing books, or giving that priceless unmarketable gift called friendship.

It would also be desirable that the inquirers should visit the districts where the humbler people live, on those occasions when some public function draws crowds into the streets. I am not among those who blame the police, whose patience, discrimination, and sympathy I have often admired, but when dealing with individual wastrels perhaps they might sometimes be imbued with a more constructive and optimistic spirit. In people who are expected to be harsh a gentle attitude is often efficacious, and may be dynamic in its effects.

Most of us read or skim the newspaper reports of the cases in the police and law courts, but few people have visited them as a public duty. Had they done so there would be no court without a probation officer, and no probation officer without a group of people of goodwill who would share with him the duty and, I add with the conviction of experience, the pleasure, of helping the young people who, having yielded to temptation, are given another chance to walk straight.

Under the probation system a child offender is placed under the supervision of a probation officer who acts as his friend and adviser, and who endeavours to restore him to the path of rectitude by kindness and personal help. The results of more humane treatment of young delinquents have been very encouraging and are steadily reducing juvenile crime. In 1923 the percentage of juvenile delinquents placed on probation without conviction was 23·14; in 1925 it was 26·18; in 1926 it was 28·12; and in 1927 it was 28·07. It is gratifying to find the percentage increasing, but there are still a number of county divisions in which there is no probation officer and probation is never used. There are actually four Welsh counties in which not a single person was put on probation—Monmouth, Anglesey, Merioneth, and Radnor.

It is not only the individual naughty children who are benefited by the probation system, for the observation—I had almost said the affectionate observation—of a body of persons who will bring their cultivated brains to look below the surface of the results of naughtiness to its causes, and study the psychology of the young criminal, is of far-reaching consequence. On this subject, Mr. J. A. Lovat-Fraser, who is acting as Hon. Secretary to the State Children's Association, writes as follows:

'Ill-health and disease, incipient insanity, mental deficiency, emotional instability, all give rise to delinquency and should all be dealt with by experts. Then again, absence of love and affection, lack of parental control, and unduly weak or severe home influence,

bad companionship—these also drive children into wrong-doing. Some causes of wrong-doing are economic. Hunger, poverty, bad housing conditions, and overcrowding, lack of employment, or unsuitable employment, are evils which affect the whole body politic. They can only be removed by the determination and "will to betterment" of the whole community.'

'Friendship works like magic,' said Mr. Cecil Chapman, who through all his many years of work in the courts was noted for his courteous, discerning compassion, and from the cellars of my memory I can relate a true and refreshing story when faith worked.

Aided by an untrustworthy servant, a man had, during my absence, spent the night in my house, had ransacked my drawers, stolen a cheque, and successfully forged my name for £45. As he was a member of a wanted gang, it seemed to be my duty to prosecute, and I did. He pleaded for a remand, saying that in two weeks' time he would get a remittance and be able to pay counsel to defend him. This was accepted; but as the money did not arrive I wrote to the magistrate and asked him to be so good as to send a barrister to see the man in prison and to take up his case, for I argued that when a man desired medical or spiritual help trained brains were placed at his service; therefore, why should not expert mental assistance be given to him if he needed it in other troubles? His defence, however, was not convincing, and as there were many previous convictions against his name, he was sent again to prison. After some months he wrote to me to say he had had time to consider things, and that in gratitude for my 'unusual action' he had decided never to go to prison again. It will not need much imagination to realise what it might mean if a man friend met that convict at the prison gates to give him a leg up to the platform of his next job and an offer of a guiding hand along the steep, jagged road leading to the Delectable Mountains.

Much of this article may sound like laudable philanthropy, but it is only common sense and trite justice. Statistics show, with painful, penetrating force, that the criminal classes come from slums, and that inhuman social surroundings give opportunities for the growth of depravity, whether it be violence, robbery, prostitution or drunkenness. Bad surroundings and evil environment are the forcing-houses of the seeds of sin, and are preventable. 'Then why the devil have you not prevented them?'

DAVID GARRICK, ACTOR-MANAGER :
TWO UNPUBLISHED LETTERS.

BY CHARLES RIDDELL WILLIAMS.

[The two letters the subject of this article are the property of the Garrick Club. Their existence had been forgotten for many years, but they were recently re-discovered and are now published by permission of the Committee.]

IN the year 1762 David Garrick was the most distinguished and popular actor in England and probably in the world. For fifteen years he had been partner with a Mr. Lacy in the management of Drury Lane Theatre, and during the whole of that period he had played leading parts in tragedy, comedy and farce. He was in addition the author, adaptor and producer of numerous plays, and it appears that in one capacity or another he had been responsible for almost every entertainment staged at Drury Lane during his period of management. By the beginning of 1763, however, it had become apparent that a change was coming over the taste of the London public: the receipts of the theatre were falling, and Garrick and his leading lady, Mrs. Cibber, found themselves playing to houses smaller than any to which they had recently been accustomed. This change in the fortunes of the theatre was due partly to a series of disagreeable incidents which had occurred among audiences during the previous season, but more particularly to the success of the novel musical entertainments of Dr. Arne and others then being staged by the manager of Covent Garden, and to the great and sudden popularity of his leading singer, Miss Brent. Furthermore, Garrick himself was tired and far from well, while his wife, to whom he was devoted, had definitely been ordered by her doctors to visit the Continent for her health.

Accordingly, some time in the early summer it was arranged that Garrick should take a long holiday from the theatre and should go abroad, leaving Lacy in sole charge of Drury Lane, to be assisted by George Garrick, who was to watch over his brother's interests, and by George Coleman, who was to give the benefit of his considerable theatrical experience. The great difficulty however, lay in the problem of finding someone who, in Garrick's absence, could

worthily play the leading parts, especially some of the exacting tragic rôles usually played by Garrick himself. The management of Drury Lane solved that problem in what we should consider to-day very daring fashion. There was at that time in London a young man called William Powell, twenty-eight years old, who had some reputation as an amateur actor and who, desirous of joining the Drury Lane company, had succeeded in getting an introduction to Garrick. In spite of Powell's inexperience Garrick and Lacy, struck apparently by his looks, fine figure and naturally sonorous voice, determined to engage him, and to use the time remaining at their disposal in training him to play tragic parts during the coming season. Accordingly, during the summer months Garrick personally instructed Powell in several characters, particularly, we are told, ' Philaster ' in Beaumont and Fletcher's play of that name and ' Posthumus ' in *Cymbeline*.

All preparations being now complete, Garrick and his wife left London on September 19, 1763, and, having stayed for a time in Paris, proceeded on a leisurely tour through France, Italy, and Germany, returning to Paris in October 1764. In the meantime Powell had made his debut at Drury Lane on October 8, 1763, and the enterprise and faith of Garrick and his partner had been rewarded by the instant success of their young protégé. The latter had spared himself nothing in order to make full use of his great opportunity, and in the season of 1763-4, a season lasting, it must be remembered, only from October to May, he had played no less than seventeen leading parts and had given in all about seventy-five performances. His parts, besides the two already mentioned, included Lear, Othello, Jaffier in *Venice Preserved*, Lusignan in *Zara*, and Lord Townly in *The Provok'd Husband*, an impressive list for one who was playing his first season as a professional actor. As a result of his success the box-office receipts had steadily increased and Lacy was well satisfied with the turn which affairs had taken.

The two letters referred to in the head-note to this article were written by Garrick from Paris in January and March 1765 to one Thomas Love, an actor and a member of the Drury Lane company. Love was, according to Boaden, ' a very useful actor both in tragedy and comedy,' and had been in the company since 1762. He had good family connections and had been educated at the Merchant Taylors' School and St. John's, Oxford. His most famous part was Falstaff, whom he is said to have played better than any actor

since Quin. He must indeed have fancied himself in the part for, not content with appearing frequently at Drury Lane in *Henry IV*, Parts I and II, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, in April 1766 he played for his benefit the title rôle in a concoction called *Falstaff's Wedding*, a sequel by one Kenrick to the Second Part of *Henry IV*. Love played many other important parts, Shakespearean and otherwise, and seems to have been just the type of experienced all-round actor who from time immemorial has been the backbone of every stock company. It is true that the 'Dramatic Censor' describes him as a 'bloody murderer of blank verse,' but that, if true, only goes to prove that his professional methods were in advance of his time and that in spirit he was brother to many West End actors of to-day. In later years there is mention of misunderstandings between Love and Garrick, but at the time when these two letters were written they were evidently on cordial if not very intimate terms.

The first letter is addressed on the outside, 'To Mr. Love in Bolton Street the bottom of Hanover Street Long Acre London,' and is as follows :

'Paris Jan^r. 27th 1765.

'DEAR SIR,—I thank you for your obliging letter and you may depend upon me that no ill use shall ever be made of y^r. plain dealing with me—I must desire you to keep our Correspondence a Secret, there are many friends to whom I ought to write that may take it ill that I neglect them when I am so well able to pay my debts—I wrote lately to *Powell*, I should be glad to know, if he takes what I said to him in good part, and whether he has shewn my Lettr. to you, or anybody else—I spoke my real thoughts to him, & if he is not poisoned by other Counsel, he may profit by them. You will greatly oblige me, when any new thing is brought upon ye stage, to let me know it's Succes—and pray tell me truly, if there is no hopefull Young Man springing up that I could make use of in Obrien's room—I once saw Griffiths & I pronounced then (I wish I may be mistaken) that he never could be an Actor—it is one of my never failing rules in Management, not to engage a Man or Woman who should be mark'd wth. that blackest of all Sins against Nature,—*Affectation*—If you will mention one Instance of Theatrical Genius with Conceit, I will sign to anything—that Tom Arne's trash is better than Shakespeare's bullion, or what will please you more, that Punch is better than Falstaff—when shall I see the Days of King William return?—I mean Shakespeare Sir—no mistakes I beg you these ticklish times—

'I hear your houses are full—you will send me all kind of news—theatrical, political, musical & nonsensical—give me an Acc^t. I beseech you (an impartial one) of any Youngsters of either Sex, who promise anything—I have my reasons for this desire, so pray be particular and distinguish their merits, if you can perceive any—I have many schemes, and a hint from you will be of service—say nothing of this letter to any one Person, but answer me fully—You see that I confide in You. Was Foote's Performance last Summer a good one ? or was it not thought so well of as his others. What is ye Comedy of ye *Platonick Lovers*, and the farce of the Tutor ? I am quite in ye Dark—the good Weather here, & my horse in a Morning have made a great change in Me since I wrote to you—I feel my Strength returning, my Nerves crisping again & if I can Escape from the great honours they do me here, & the great Kindness they would show me, I shall neither fall, or be much shaken this bout. However I am not yet quite out of ye wood & [word illegible] I shall forbear hollowing—

'Write to me soon, Dear Love, &

'believe me

'most sincerely

'Yours

'D. GARRICK.

'Monsieur Garrick,

'chez Mefs^{rs}. Foley & Co.

'Banquiers a Paris.

'remember me slily to Bradshaw—& tell Johnston & his wife that I have great regard for them—Bradshaw must not say a word—'

Garrick's mention of a letter of his to Powell probably refers to his letter of advice to the young actor dated December 12, 1764 (Boaden's 'Garrick Correspondence,' i. 177), written in answer to Powell's very modest letter to him of March 30, 1764 ('Garrick Correspondence,' i. 169), telling the older actor of his success at Drury Lane and thanking him for his help and tuition. O'Brien was leading juvenile comedian in the Drury Lane company from 1758 to April 1764, in which month he married, without her parents' consent, the eldest daughter of the Earl of Ilchester, Lady Susan Fox-Strangways, with whom he subsequently went to America, having abandoned the stage as a profession. His sudden departure from Drury Lane thus took place during Garrick's absence abroad. *The Platonic Wife* and *The Tutor* are names of plays which Garrick had evidently heard of as about to be staged at Drury Lane. The former, a comedy adapted by a Mrs. Griffiths from *L'Heureux*

Divorce, one of Marmontel's 'Contes Moraux,' had in fact been produced on January 24, 1765, just three days before Garrick was writing his letter to Love, and in it Powell had created the part of Lord Frankland. The play ran eventually for five or six nights, a run which in those days did not by any means indicate failure. Garrick has somehow got the name of the play wrong, but it will be seen that in the second letter he writes it correctly. *The Tutor* was a farce ascribed to the Rev. J. Townley, author of the popular play *High Life Below Stairs*. Actually it was performed at Drury Lane for the first time on February 4, 1765, was a complete failure and was withdrawn after the second performance.

The main interest of the letter, however, lies not in the details of its references and allusions, but rather in the broad light which it throws on Garrick's character. Although he is on holiday it is clear that he cannot keep his mind off the Theatre and that he is eager for news of theatrical affairs in London. Like most successful men of our own and every generation he has become at the age of forty-nine somewhat of a slave to his calling. The fact that Garrick, like every London manager of to-day, is crying out for news of promising young actors and actresses gives to the letter, in the eyes of those who are familiar with the conversation of his present-day successors, an amazing flavour of modernity. His anxiety as to the affairs of Foote, for the last few years a bitter enemy of his, is very human, and his views on affectation in actors are interesting in view of the fact that to-day we are apt by habit to regard Garrick as the greatest of artificial actors rather than as the first of the naturalistic school, which, according to all the contemporary evidence, is his true position in the history of his art.

The second letter must have been delivered by a friend, for it is addressed simply 'a Monsieur Love':

March 3rd/65.

'DEAR SIR,—I shall now answer your two last favours—I am very sorry that you was not fix'd upon for ye Character of Sir John Brute—it is a favourite one of yours & very deservedly so, & I allotted it to you, because I thought you the most fit person to supply my place—but, my good friend, my Judgment at that time was not to over rule Mr. Lacy's, who certainly had a right to give the part where he thought it w^d be best for the theatre—He and I think differently in that particular, & that is ye only comfort I can give you for your disappointment: You have good sense & Experience & therefore should see these things in their true light—

Mr. Lacy is left sole Manager & has a right to think and act by himself till my return—I left only my sentiments of things to be chop'd & chang'd about as he pleas'd, & circumstances required—If you really differ with *him* in opinion, that *Powell* is a better Actor than *David Garrick*, can you desire better consolation than that the afores^d. *D. Garrick* thinks you a better *S^r John Brute* than *M^r Tho^s King*—I may be partial, & so may you, & so may he—but there is no wrong to you, as you did not play ye Part before, & if you had, I cannot but think that a manager has an undoubted right to change the Characters from one to another to ye best of his Judgment—there is no theatrical sore, but has it's plaister, & if you had not let you friends into ye secret all had been well—once again I am sorry that you and y^r friends were disappointed. So much for that—now for something of greater moment—

'I most heartily wish you success in y^r great undertaking at Richmond—you cannot have a better man for y^r Business than Sanderson clear-brain'd to ye skull of him—but, I fear, y^r house will be too large—90 p^d. for Richmond is a monstrous sum—! however y^r knowledge & Ability will make it a most comfortable thing, & you may come to Hampton for a little (theatrical) sense (as the Boys do at school) if you think I have any to spare—I shall be glad to have you so near me—& shall look upon y^r Academy as a Kind of Nursery to ye Drury Lane Garden—prosper the plough—

'Your account of *Dodd* pleases me—I dread a Stroler, they contract such insufferable affectation that they disgust me—I never could account for the Country Actors being so very wide of ye mark—pray enquire and let me know more about that *Dodd*—We want a second *Obrien* most dreadfully—what a loss to us that Young Man is! & I fear he has not alter'd for his own happiness, & even Consequence—I don't like the *platonick Wife*. What the *Tutor* is I dont know—I hear my good friends give it to me; I have not seen a line of it—I am grown callous to all they can say, and even to my theatrical affairs—I have had more serious thoughts and apprehensions—

'I have fix'd my time for leaving this agreeable place about ye 15th of next month—what I can do, or shall do, or be able to do is not in my power to determine—pray let me have another letter from You, & write close and in a small Character—let it be a Hodge podge of News of all kinds—You never mention y^r Brother to me. I hope he is well—my best wishes to him.

'When you see *Hopkins* whisper in ye ear that he must not send me but one letter at a time in M^r Luard's parcel—if there are *two* to come, he sh^d. take care to Enclose these as Compact as possible to make one thin letter—but he had better send his letters to me

a Mess^{rs} Foley & Co. Banquiers a Paris where I desire you will direct to me as usual.

'Ever & most

'sincerely y^{rs}

'D. GARRICK.'

In the first paragraph of this letter we see Garrick in the process of dealing with one of those green-room intrigues and jealousies from which all his life he was complaining that he was never free. On this occasion the nature of the trouble is clear from the text of the letter, and it is only necessary to add that Sir John Brute is the principal character in Vanbrugh's comedy *The Provoked Wife*, first played by Betterton and later one of Garrick's most successful parts. The Mr. Thomas King mentioned is the famous actor of that name who in 1777 created the part of Sir Peter Teazle in *The School for Scandal*, and who survived to play at Drury Lane for many years after both Love and Garrick were dead. Apropos of Love's disappointment at Lacy's decision, it is pleasant to record that some years later, on April 2, 1770, Love had his desire, for on that date he played Sir John Brute for the first time at Drury Lane and for his own benefit. Let us hope that he had a 'bumper' house that evening and that the autocratic Lacy was there to watch him.

By the time he wrote this second letter it seems that Garrick was a trifle piqued at the praises which certain people, including apparently Lacy himself, were lavishing on Powell's talent, and there can be little doubt that it was the news of the latter's continued and still increasing success which in part prompted Garrick to return to England shortly afterwards, a return indeed foretold at the end of the letter.

The 'undertaking at Richmond' was a project of opening a new theatre on Richmond Green with Love as manager and leading actor. Such a theatre was in fact designed and built by Sanderson, and the first performance in the new building took place on June 15, 1765, when Love recited a prologue specially written for the occasion by Garrick; but the venture does not seem to have been successful, and the theatre soon passed into other hands.

The mention of Dodd is of special interest, for we can now for the first time trace the occasion on which Garrick's attention was drawn to this subsequently famous comedian. In answer to Garrick's earlier letter Love has evidently, in a letter now lost given him particulars of Dodd, who was then a young actor of about

twenty-five years of age with nothing but provincial experience. Garrick appears to have been impressed with Love's account, and on his return from the Continent he seems to have asked his friend Dr. Hoadley to make a point of seeing Dodd act and to report on him. Hoadley saw Dodd in several characters at Bath and we have his letter to Garrick giving a detailed description of the young actor's performances ('Garrick Correspondence,' i. 183). As a result of that letter Garrick engaged Dodd for Drury Lane, and there he made his debut on October 3, 1765. This Dodd was the William James Dodd who afterwards became renowned as an actor of fops and coxcombs and was regarded as the legitimate successor of Colley Cibber in those parts. He was the most famous Sir Andrew Aguecheek of his own or any other period, his Bob Acres was universally admired, and he was the original Sir Benjamin Backbite in *The School for Scandal*, Dangle in *The Critic*, and Lord Foppington in *A Trip to Scarborough*. Charles Lamb immortalised Dodd's 'broad moor' face' and his 'thousand agreeable impertinences' in his essay 'On some of the Old Actors.' The otherwise insignificant Love acquires in our eyes a reflected glory through having made and communicated to the right quarter so great a discovery.

Hopkins to whom Garrick sends the message in his last paragraph is almost certainly the Hopkins who for years was prompter at Drury Lane and whose wife and two daughters were at various times actresses in the company. One of his daughters, Priscilla, had for second husband the famous actor John Philip Kemble, brother of Mrs. Siddons.

In his letter Garrick says that he expects to leave Paris for England about April 15 : in fact, he probably left a few days later, for he actually arrived in London on the 27th, having been away from home over eighteen months. At the time when he was writing he was evidently uncertain of his plans for the future, probably because he had not yet wholly recovered from the effects of a serious bilious fever which he had contracted at Munich the previous September ; but, as might have been expected of him, as soon as he returned to England he plunged into his old energetic life in defiance of the doctors and despite those 'serious thoughts and apprehensions' referred to in the letter. At the beginning of the new season, in the words of Genest, he 'introduced the present commodious method of illuminating the stage by lights not visible to the audience,' and by November he was acting again himself at

Drury Lane. There he continued every year until his retirement in June 1776, less than three years before his death. Love died four years before Garrick in 1774, leaving a son who, as Nathaniel Dance, afterwards went into the service of the East India Company and was the hero of a somewhat unorthodox engagement with enemy warships during the French wars, an exploit for which he was subsequently knighted.

It is not pretended that the discovery and publication of these two letters of Garrick add more than a footnote to the theatrical history of the period at which they were written, but few will deny that they give to the reader a pleasant glimpse of a great man in an informal mood; that they provide if it were needed further evidence of his sincere and enthusiastic devotion to his calling; and that they prove once again that human nature, even in the theatre, was in 1765 very much what it is in 1929.

THE UNPROFITABLE SERVANT.

BY JOHN S. FISHER.

‘Onesimus . . . which in time past was to thee unprofitable . . .’

It was evening when the boat came through the Porto di Lido and crawled across the lagoon towards the city which lay like a cluster of bubbles on the water, glittering in the low lights of a misty sunset. Andrea thought that never had Venice been so quiet and so empty—it was like coming back after all these years to a city of the dead—in vain he looked for the old, familiar gaiety: fairs and booths along the water-front; noisy crowds swirling around hucksters and tumblers and dancing bears; flowers and flags and gay be-decked gondolas. There seemed to hang over the place a heavy silence like a thundercloud, turning light to lurid greyness and killing joy and colour. The year 1298 had crowned a series of crushing disasters. Four years had passed since the flaring-up of the war with Genoa; years in which Venice had seen the fall of Candia, the defeat off Lajazzo, the loss of the great ‘Syrian Caravan’ in the port of Modona, the Genoese fleets spreading like a pestilence, up the *Ægean*, the Adriatic, the Hellespont, the Euxine. For an instant there had been a flicker of success: when the powers at Constantinople had dared to lay hands on the Baile of the Venetians, Roger Morosini had swept in with his ships and sacked Galata, while another expedition in the Black Sea had burnt the Genoese post at Caffa. But the brief flame died down: the Venetian prisoners in Constantinople paid with their lives for Morosini’s daring; and while resentment was still smouldering at home over Gradenigo’s ‘closing of the Council’, the fleet of Andrea Dandolo had been overwhelmed by the Genoese at Curzola and 7,000 men carried captive to Genoa. Venice was full of the spirit of disaster, and men moved with grim faces to repair the damage done.

The ship anchored off the Riva degli Schiavoni and two bare, brown seamen rowed Andrea ashore through water which the sunset filled with soft brightness. They left him with his bundles on the stone causeway, where the citizens were strolling in the cool of the evening and the Black Sea merchants shutting up their stalls. He watched the skiff start back to the trader, threading its way

through a maze of fishing-boats and war-galleys towering at their anchorage, then he turned towards the town. Over near the Arsenal—where light and clatter told of work pressed on far into the evening—he found the place that he was looking for, a dark shop, full of bales and cases, mysterious in the twilight. He greeted the shopkeeper and then put his question.

‘The house of Ser Marco Polo?’ The man was busy with a lamp. He lit it, and in the smoky golden light Andrea saw him shrugging his shoulders. ‘You did not know, then? Messer Polo was a rich man. He fitted out his own galley. A month ago he was at Curzola—now, they do not know, but it is said that the fishes have his body.’

Dusk had fallen when Andrea came into the open again, purple twilight full of dim hurrying forms and cressets tossing crimson flames in the breeze. He stood for a moment looking out over the lagoon towards Murano, at the lights of boats which splashed pools of swirling colour on the black water, then slowly he made his way to a church nearby. That very day news had come of another galley lost off Chios, and here in a little hollow of candle-light, the darkness close around them, they were singing a requiem for the souls that had gone into a greater darkness. Andrea sat down at the back of the church where the light melted into the shadows. The slow chanting rose like breakers on a lonely shore, like bells tolling in the night-time, but, as he reflected, he had more cause for sorrow than any of the mourners. For twenty-six years he had been striving to purge his soul of a great shame, and now the man from whom he might have had forgiveness was lying dead on the beaches of Curzola. All those years had gone for naught, the years of toil and agony and peril, when he had wandered through the isles of the *Ægean* and the cut-throat cities of the Levant; from Byzantium to Tyre, from Acre to Alexandria; over the wastes of Georgia and up the hot valley of the Nile to Syene and the Cataracts. There had been something of the white fire of fanaticism in the zeal with which he had worked and fought, the zeal which had sent him, tight-lipped and trembling, to brave lashing seas and sweeping sandstorms, dark bazaars and frozen mountain-passes, the keen, unsleeping cruelty of the infidel and the sorcery and black mystery of the Orient. At last the time had come when he felt worthy to return to the master he had deserted—to return and ask forgiveness. But he had arrived too late.

Marco Polo had come home a rich man—‘*il Milione*’ they

called him with awe in their jesting—a soldier, a statesman, commander of his own galley. But Andrea remembered him as he had been twenty-six years ago, a slim, dark boy with thoughtful eyes, in which one saw the spirit that burned within him. A slight figure riding between the bulky forms of his father and his uncle, riding toward the deserts in the grey light of the dawn.

In the year 1271 Andrea had been still a boy, the servant of a Venetian merchant of Acre who had brought him there from Venice three summers before. At Acre he had seen the Polos as they passed through on their way back from Jerusalem with the oil from the Holy Sepulchre, which they were taking to the great Cham of Tartary. The travellers had visited his master and Andrea had fallen under their spell—the two elders with their brown faces and the eyes that held the memory of the far corners of the world: the boy, just his own age, slender and ardent, his gaze ever questing for fresh marvels; he had worshipped them from afar, and seen them depart with longing. Then his master had died, and as if God had heard his prayers, the Polos had arrived back again, come from Lajazzo in the galley of King Leon of Armenia, at the summons of Tebaldo the legate, who was now Pope Gregory. Before they started out again, with the Preaching Friars whom the new Pope sent with them, Andrea had made his way into their presence, had won them over with his entreaties. They sailed from Acre one autumn morning, and Andrea was with them, pale with pride and hope and resolution, body-servant and squire to the young Marco.

To the end of his days he would remember that journey, along the coast of Syria, the hills purple above the horizon; the long swinging blue seas, the creak of the decks, the flapping of the great red sails. Lajazzo, the port, the crowded, noisy shipping, argosies of Venice and Genoa and Pisa, the dark, fragrant warehouses of the spice merchants, and the bustle of the caravans assembling. They rode forth in the morning when the sunrise was pink on the mountains, and as they filed through the narrow gates of the city, all the muleteers burst into song. Then days of riding over wide plains and up narrow mountain-passes where the castles of the Knights Templars hung on the bare, sheer crags.

But as they went they came upon white towns gutted and blackened, and heard tales of massacre and pillage. It was only five years since the armies of Bundokdari, Soldan of Egypt, had

invaded Armenia and burned Sis and Ais : only two since he had butchered the Christians of Antioch and sacked their homes and their churches. Even now the passes were full of his horsemen, waiting in the woods to rob and kill and torture. The Dominicans listened with wide eyes, fingering their rosaries ; then one day they announced that they would go no farther. To the scornful Venetians they entrusted the Pope's gifts of broided clothes and crystal vases for the Great Khan ; then they betook themselves to a castle of the Templars to wait for convoy back to the coast. Nicolo Polo raged and swore at the cravens who had failed their master. Maffeo shrugged and observed that the party was well rid of them. Marco said nothing, but Andrea saw that behind the sneer that masked his face there lay an agony of shame and disillusionment. Timidly he tried to comfort him. 'They were too old, Fra Nicolo and Fra Guielmo, too old and cowards to boot. But I will be true to you.' His heart warmed at the boy's look of gratitude.

They left the Friars and pushed on northward into Turcomania ; by Sivas, where Andrea lit a candle to the brave memory of Blaise the martyr ; to Arzingan and the domains of the Eastern Tartars, and there first met squat men on wiry horses, driving their cattle south for the winter. They were friendly enough to the Polos, and paid grudging respect to the golden tablet of Kublai, but Andrea shuddered as he looked at their flat, heavy faces and recalled tales of the great Jengiz Khan with his hosts spreading ruin like wildfire : of Jengiz' ruthless grandson Hulagu. The hills seemed to have grown sinister and mysterious, the sky cloudy and lurid with mystery, and the nights were a torture of evil dreams and strange noises. They rode across a bleak plain, and saw beyond it two peaks rising into the snow clouds ; peaks which Nicolo hailed as Ararat. But Andrea hardly raised his eyes to look at them. In a stupor of cold and fatigue, he was plodding hopelessly, lost to all sense of time or place or direction, in a nightmare of hunger and weariness, far from all that was real or human. They were moving southward to Mosul ; from there they would follow the Tigris down to Baghdad and so on by Yezd and Kirman to Ormuz, whence they would strike north-eastward for the Pamirs and the heart of Asia.

Names which a year ago would have set his heart beating quicker : Baku, Baldach, where the one-eyed shoemaker by faith had moved a mountain ; Kirman, Ormuz, Kobiam, and Timochain where grows the Tree of the Sun, under whose branches Alexander had

fought Darius ; Balashan, the land of rubies, the land where graze steeds of the stock of Bucephalus ; Kesmur and Kashgar and Samarcand, with the miraculous pillar of St. John the Baptist ; the desert of Lob and the lands of Prester John, and so by city after city of marvel to Shandu and Kinsai and the stately beauty of the court of Kublai. So much they heard from the talk of Nicolo and Maffeo, as they sat at night under a smoky lamp in some cold, verminous caravanserai, or crouched by a windy red camp fire under a multitude of stars. Marco would listen intent, his chin in his hands, staring rapt into the flames, and afterwards would roll himself up to sleep unmoving, his fancy ranging far away among the lakes and groves of Kinsai, or amid the tents and the banners, the elephants and the horses of the Great Khan's locust army.

But Andrea knew other tales that kept him sleepless half the night. For hard by Timochain of the Sun tree was Muhelet, the land of the Old Man of the Mountain, Aloeddin and his Assassins, and rumour had it that though slain by the sword of Hulagu, Aloeddin was not dead. And Kesmur was a country of magicians who could breathe life into their idols and blot out the sun in the heavens. Everywhere was savage wilderness and hills so high that upon them all life stopped and even fire would burn no longer. Beyond the town of Lop was a desert of shifting sands, vast and waterless, haunted by evil spirits who took the shape and voice of men to lead travellers to their doom. Behind the lands of Prester John were nightmare countries of magic : home of all the brood of Satan, men with tails and men with horns, one-legged men and men tusked like boars, evil creatures unclean and horrible, pessemyres and pissitakes, flying serpents, vampires and werewolves, vultures whose black wings filled the heavens.

As he lay in his rugs staring up at the sky, the stars would dance and whirl before his eyes and vanish, and quivering with terror, he would feel that he had come beyond the bounds of God's protection, and must wander evermore in an inferno from which there is no returning. Dawn would find him white and dark-eyed, starting at shadows like a colt that has been cruelly beaten. The elder Polos cursed him for a cowardly weakling, and Marco looked on, contemptuous and uncomprehending.

They were travelling south down the valley of the Tigris. One evening as they lay encamped by the river, in a villainous hamlet of mud houses, a man came striding towards them out of the twilight—a tall man in a white robe, with a hawk nose and high, empty

cheek-bones. Behind him was a boy leading a donkey, a little boy with scared eyes, like Andrea's. The old man spoke to Maffeo in a tongue which the others did not understand, and after a moment the Venetian turned to his brother. 'A juggler,' he said, 'who claims to have the arts of the Indians and the Chaldees. He would show us his tricks; shall we watch him?'

The shadows were deepening on the plain, the river ran steel-grey, a little wind was sighing among the houses. They settled themselves in a ring, the Venetians grouped together, their servants and camel-men whispering round the circle. The old man stepped into the middle; he had taken off his robes and wore only a loin-cloth, and in the dimness he towered like a giant. He had a wand in his hand, which he cast upon the ground, then the boy handed him a reed-pipe and he began to play a thin, shrill tune that sounded like the murmur of the wind in the reeds by the river. Marco stiffened suddenly and Andrea gasped and crossed himself, for the wand moved and bent and they saw that it was a great snake, rearing up and swaying to the music. Then the piping stopped, and it was a stick again. He thrust it upright in the ground and made a pass over it with a thin hand, and it was a thick-flowering tamarisk bush; another pass, it was a stick again. 'By the Virgin,' said Marco, 'but it is black magic!' Andrea was shaking so that his teeth chattered. But Nicolo shook his head. 'They do that better at Samarcand, eh, brother?' 'Aye, and do you mind the man in the market at Bokhara?' he added, and called out to the juggler. The man moved over and looked at them closely; under the gaze Andrea felt his blood run cold. Then he pursed up his lips and nodded. The boy dragged into the ring a rude brazier full of glowing sticks. The crimson light shone on the gaunt figure of the magician: in the glow he looked like a fiend in Hell. Then he drew a circle round the brazier and stepped inside. On the hot sticks he cast some sort of powder. The flames shot up, brilliant and blinding.

Half an hour later he had gone again, with the little boy and the donkey, vanished into the night. Even the Polos were pale and shaken, and Andrea moved thereafter with the dazed stiffness of a sleepwalker.

In Baghdad he found a trader who was starting north with his caravan: a Nestorian Christian who had a smattering of the Levantine *lingua franca*. For a certain sum of money the man agreed to hide him until the Polos had started again, and to take

him in the caravan to Damascus, whence he could make his way to the coast, to Christendom. Andrea hesitated, then there came to his mind a picture of Chioggia and the red sails of the fishing-boats. He slipped away from the Serai that evening with a little sack of money from Nicolo's saddle-bag. His life was haunted by creatures unspeakable which rose from the bright heart of a brazier.

The Polos knew the uselessness of hue and cry in that dark warren of mud-huts. They sneered and forgot. Only in Marco's heart was burning pain at this second treachery.

They left early one morning, and from a house-top Andrea watched them pass down the empty street. Far away through the sleeping town he heard the tinkle of their camel-bells and the thudding of horses' hooves, then he saw them, dimly, below him, Marco, a slight figure riding between the bulky forms of his father and his uncle, riding toward the deserts in the grey light of the dawn. They passed, the string of camels padded by, the camel-bells grew faint and died away. As he lay, staring sickly after them, somewhere near at hand he heard a cock crowing.

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The service was over and the church empty save for two forms in black, kneeling motionless. Andrea knelt too, sobbing he knew not what. Out of the shadows he saw for a moment a young, pale face with dark eyes keen and ardent. Next morning the word came to Venice that Marco Polo was not dead but a prisoner in Genoa.

The Genoese had heard tales of *il Milione* and demanded a ransom that no king could have paid. At Venice men shook their heads forebodingly, but in Andrea's heart joy soared like a skylark. 'He is in prison in Genoa,' he said, 'and it is God's will that I should go to him.' People expostulated, entreated, finally shrugged him away as a madman. Before he started, he went back to the church and prayed again, but this time no figure appeared to him. His last prayer was to Blaise the Martyr, to whom he had burned a candle that winter day in Cappadocia. The next morning he took a boat to Mestre, and thence set out on foot along the road to Padua.

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Marco Polo had been three months a prisoner and the time hung heavy on his hands. Stone cells and a walled courtyard were

stiffing to one who had ranged the world from the Pamirs to the Isle of Zaipan; from the Northern Darkness to the Indian Sea. He would dream at night of the winds that swept across the great uplands, and of horsemen who rode like those winds swooping out of the darkness; he would dream of the Great Khan who had been to him as a father; he would be back in the city of Yan-gui where he had governed, and half-waking would clap his hands and call in Tartar for his bodyguards and his servants. That day he had found a Pisan, one Rusticiano, to write down the tale as he told it; they composed it slowly, in vile French, stumbling over the spelling of place-names. They worked on into the evening, in the weak light that fell on them by the open window. . . . 'his Holiness received them in a distinguished manner, and immediately despatched them with letters papal, accompanied by two friars of the order of Preachers.' . . . Rusticiano looked up. 'There were five of you, then; yourself, your father and uncle, and the Dominicans?' Marco was moving about the bare room. 'There was another,' he said, 'my servant. But he deserted us at Baghdad. What was his name again?' He went over and looked out of the window, a tiny crescent moon was hanging in the pale sky. He remembered how the new moon had peered between the trees in the deer parks of Shandu. He turned to the Pisan with a gesture. 'I forget his name,' he said. 'We will not mention him. He was a coward and a traitor. He is better forgotten.'

Andrea came to a village in the evening, tired and weary, clad in the dirty yellow jerkin of a juggler or tumbler. The place was a mere huddle of filthy huts on the hillside, where the road wound down through the woods, but his face brightened as he stood in the street, for away over the tree tops he could see the Gulf of Genoa, a tender silken green with the new moon above it. He had been a weary time upon the road, but now he was near the end of his journey.

The inn was a crazy wooden structure like a tumble-down byre, its interior low and dark and smoky. The proprietor ignored a poor wandering mountebank, but his daughter, a bold-eyed, bare-foot slut of fifteen, gave him a little unspeakable food and showed him a barn he could sleep in. When he had eaten, he wandered out into the street where someone had lit a fire before one of the houses. From his shoulder he unslung his guitar and strummed on

it loudly until a crowd had gathered—a group of lean, pinched faces, staring in the firelight. He sang them a song or two, striving to put into his voice the Ligurian accent and intonation, though he knew that here among the hills all strangers were equally foreign. To be on the safe side he explained that he had travelled for many years among the paynim; that he had visited Egypt and the tomb of Our Saviour at Jerusalem. In proof he spread out a yellow cloth, and on it did some simple tricks that he had learned in Smyrna and Alexandria, tricks that set them gasping and murmuring. Other people added themselves to the circle, old peasants and wild children, and a soldier in an unhooked leather tunic; he seated himself outside the inn and the barefooted girl sat beside him. Andrea's tricks were finished, he held out his cap and a few little coins fell into it, but men cried out for more. 'Sing again, sing!' He looked round at their watching faces; they pressed close so that he could not see the soldier. Then he struck the strings and sang, and as he sang, the wind in the trees, the stars, the firelight, all joined their magic to make him forget himself. When he had done there was a stir of applause. The girl from the inn smiled at the soldier. 'A pretty song,' she whispered, 'I think that it was a lover's song,' and moved nearer to him. But the soldier pushed her away and beckoned to the landlord. 'That song,' he said, 'I heard it when I was prisoner in Pola. It is a Venetian song.' He broke off and glanced at Andrea. 'He is a big man. I think he carries a dagger. Where does he sleep? In the stable? Then when he goes there, drop the bar on the door. My captain will be here before dawn; we will see what he has to say.'

It was warm in the barn and the straw was soft. Andrea huddled down luxuriously into it. To-morrow, please God, he would sleep in Genoa. Marco Polo, Marco Polo. . . .

He was roused by a blinding light in his face and a sword at his throat. The stable was full of armed men, glittering in the torch-light. They jerked him to his feet and shook him. 'Come, spy,' they said, 'we will see what the captain makes of you.' It was bitterly cold in the street, but he must not shiver for they would put it down to fear. Then they were in the inn, the low room lit by a swinging lantern. The Genoese captain was seated by the table, a dark, heavy man, with a cruel, flat face like the Hulagu of Andrea's old nightmares. They held Andrea before him, and he stared slowly at the captive. Then he spat and addressed him. 'You are a Venetian spy,' he asserted, and laughed when Andrea shook

his head. 'A spy,' he repeated, nodding, and his great hunched shadow nodded with him. The swinging lamp sent the shadows of the men-at-arms, helmeted and gigantic, trooping round the walls. 'A spy, and we will make you admit it.' One of the soldiers left the room; a moment later he returned, dragging a glowing brazier of charcoal. He drew his dagger and thrust the blade into the redness, while the captain leered at Andrea. But Andrea did not look at him. He was staring at the brazier, and for a moment the room was full of shrill piping, like the winds in the reeds by the Tigris. A host of new shadows swelled the throng that loomed up around him. Then he banished them, and his thoughts fixed on his master. Now he would never know.

'God, but that took a time!' said the captain. He moved to the door and looked out. It was still very dark, but there was a feeling of dawn in the air. He turned back into the room, stretching himself and yawning like a great tiger. 'Take him out and finish him off,' he ordered. 'We ride at sunrise. God, I am sleepy.'

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The prisoner in Genoa stirred in his sleep and called out loudly. Then he woke and sat up, trembling, and reached for his crucifix. It was still very dark, but there was a feeling of dawn in the air.

THE WITCHES OF RIDING MILL, 1673.

BY LIEUT.-COLONEL G. R. B. SPAIN, C.M.G., F.S.A.

It is perhaps not generally known that a well organised group of so-called witches existed between Shotley Bridge and Corbridge, in the county of Northumberland, until the latter part of the seventeenth century.

In this twentieth century few people in England take much interest in witches. The modern idea of a witch, no doubt taken from our admirably illustrated fairy tales, is a picturesque and bent old woman with a crooked stick and a bright eye. As a companion she usually has a large black cat. She wears a tall, pointed black hat with a flat brim and often very smart high-heeled and silver-buckled shoes. At night she rides through the air on a broomstick to strange gatherings of her kind, and they meet on lonely moors or in ruined chapels. This completes the modern view of a now nearly forgotten superstition.

Yet only 200 years ago witches were a serious matter indeed, and for some time during and after the Commonwealth England and Scotland were in the throes of an anti-witch crusade. The searcher of seventeenth-century records sometimes comes across the mention of witches. Often the details are confused fragments, crabbed entries in parish accounts. Sometimes they are amazingly complete, records of witch trials lasting days, with pages of extraordinary evidence, revealing a sudden picture of life and belief so utterly different and so foreign to our modern ways of thinking as to bewilder even the most intolerant and narrow minded.

The early writers on witchcraft have confused the subject from the very beginning. One group believed the witches were really in league with the powers of darkness and the supernatural. They claimed that witches were in touch with the devil, that they worshipped him as a god, and that they obtained their remarkable powers, as revealed by the evidence of the trials, by their active antagonism to Christianity. The other group of writers appealed to common sense; they believed that witches were only poor mentally affected wretches, who, owing to unfortunate circumstances, had been swept into a vortex of persecution instead of

being locked up in the local madhouse. They claimed that witches were half-witted and pathetic creatures who suffered from visions and hysteria, and, in order to meet the attacks of the other group of writers, they denied that the remarkable details given by witnesses at the trials had ever taken place in reality.

It is, of course, a fact that witches were not an invention of the Reformation period ; they have been known throughout the ages. Before Christianity came into power witchcraft was a known and a frightening thing to the cultivated Roman : a Roman altar found at Benwell near Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and now in the entrance hall of the Society of Antiquaries at Burlington House, is dedicated to three witches. Throughout the Dark Ages witchcraft flourished exceedingly, and the cult appears to have ended in a sort of *auto-da-fé* in the seventeenth century. This final collapse seems to have been brought about more by the slow spread of education downwards from the cultivated classes to the lower stratum of country folk than to any other cause. The enormous number of people who actually suffered torture and death as witches through the Middle Ages, and up to the beginning of the eighteenth century, points to something more powerful than mere mania of the few. This fact, combined with many of the fragments of evidence that have survived, can be made to show that witchcraft is probably a very interesting survival of a prehistoric religion.

This religion was one of the most ancient of the beliefs of mankind. It was, in brief, the old fertility cult of neolithic man. The belief that certain acts, performed at certain times, in certain ways each year, stimulated and encouraged by sympathetic magic the natural growth of things. It seems to have existed as a religion before agriculture was thought of, for the chief witch festivals have been shown to be at the May and November eves, two seasonal orgies before the cultivation of crops was invented by man ; and thus the cult has its roots in the very childhood of the human race. When the hunter ruled the world, and game and tribal warfare were the only ways of living ; when the primitive herdsman drove his beasts to new pastures each spring, fertility and increase meant life and continuity, but sterility was death and oblivion. The evolution of such a primitive religion was a natural thing, and once it became part of the life of man its eradication was nearly impossible. With each new wave of conquest through the ages came possible accretions to the old cult, but not annihilation. New languages and new religions swept over it, and passed it by, leaving the

original belief slightly altered perhaps, but by no means dead. An ancient thing, too well rooted in the soil of its origin to be destroyed, it clung tenaciously to the more ignorant and less thickly inhabited parts of the country. In the quiet valleys and woods the sympathetic Keltic deities found it and passed on. The gods of the Romans marched over it and perished. The Teutonic deities towered above its lowly growth and died in turn. And last of all the Christians came.

At first the two religions, Christianity and witchcraft, continued side by side, so different in every way as to be almost unaware of each other. One claimed the spiritual side of life, the other looked after the animal and material aspect of things. One was the religion of the cultured and well-born, the other the guarded secret of the ignorant and lowly. But there came a time when the Church found the ancient growth at its very feet in the tangled underwood of the minds of the peasants. As the grip of the Church grew stronger, so did it extend its ban to cover such old things, until finally the fertility rites were either approved of with laughter, witness the Maypole, or they were rooted out by force. The abolition of witchcraft in Great Britain took many centuries, and the investigations by Church and Law were as cruel as any other form of persecution. Customs die hard in the north of England, and it was natural that the old fertility belief should have been a strong growth on Tyneside, even in its last and most debased form.

Witchcraft seems to have descended from a light-hearted prehistoric religion, full of dancing and laughter, approved of and adored by the whole primitive community; but by the seventeenth century it had become so debased, and its last few secret supporters were so persecuted that the cult relied upon fear in order to prevail. As the old rites were to stimulate life and the growth of things, its priesthood and leaders claimed the power to control all growth. In turn the witches claimed management and mastery. And so came about a complete inversion. This control was finally used to wither growth and blast life. A powerful weapon it was against those who knew of, but were antagonistic, or who betrayed the old religion. This was the natural and final defence of the witches against their neighbours, and it is revealed over and over again in the trials.

These trials in Northumberland and elsewhere show that witchcraft, even in its last stages, was well organised. The witch groups

were called covens, and each coven consisted of a leader and twelve others. The leader seems to have taken the part of the old fertility god, and to have been his reincarnation for the time being, with the god's privileges. The various rites and ceremonies were conducted by this leader at the secret gatherings. He was often disguised as an animal, sometimes wearing horns and a skin, or he wore black clothing of leather garments with a black mask and other attributes that completely concealed his true identity. It is worth noting that he was seldom or never betrayed, probably because of this. He may even have sometimes been the local squire, with a taste for the erotic!

It is agreed by anthropologists that the animal disguise used by native races in their ritual dances originally represented the animal the family or tribe claimed descent from and kinship with. If the remains of this totemistic belief continued in the witch cult the frequent references to witches changing into certain animals can be explained, for the sudden change of a hero or a leader into an animal points to an obsolete animal cult remaining as a folk memory. For example, if the hare was originally a sacred animal in Britain, then the sudden change by magic of a witch into a hare would take place if this metamorphosis was expected or desired, for folk memory would continue the forgotten taboo.

An interesting account of witches in 1673 at Riding Mill in Northumberland is set out at great length in 'The Dispositions from the Castle at York relating to offences committed in the Northern Counties.' This account reveals the witch cult in the north in its last stage of decline.

In the year 1673 Ann Armstrong, a spinster of Birksnook, a place near Mickley-on-Tyne, to the east of Stocksfield in Northumberland, gave evidence of an amazing kind before a number of county magistrates, who seem to have held a series of investigations. It is obvious from the evidence that Ann Armstrong was closely in touch with a witchcraft organisation over a large district of some fifty square miles. This area was bounded on the east by a line drawn from Prudhoe to Ebchester, on the south by the upper reach of the Derwent valley from Ebchester to Blanchland, on the west by a line drawn from Blanchland to Corbridge, and on the north by the River Tyne. This country in the seventeenth century was thickly wooded, with open moors on the higher ground, and the population was widely scattered, except perhaps along the south bank of the River Tyne. It is worth noting that this

tract of country is crossed by the famous Roman road, the Deor Street, running from York over the Cheviots into Scotland, and that on the edges of the area are the ruins of two Roman towns, Ebchester and Corbridge.

Whether the intimate knowledge of witches and their beliefs revealed by Ann Armstrong was acquired by chance, or whether she was actually one of the witches herself, it is difficult to say, but she seems to have believed what she said, and her statements involved no less than some sixty-five persons, chiefly from this district, many of whom seem to have been questioned, and some of whom were arrested and imprisoned. Ann Armstrong's home was at Birksnook, but, when the story begins, she was a farm servant of one 'Mable Foulter,' of Burtree House, which place must have been within a few miles of Stocksfield-on-Tyne. From her evidence she seems to have been sent by her mistress in August 1672 to buy eggs in Stocksfield from Ann Forster, the wife of Richard Forster of Stocksfield; and, as the two women could not agree about the price of the eggs, Ann Forster suddenly asked Ann Armstrong to sit down and be steadily gazed at. This Ann Armstrong very weakly did. From this simple beginning her troubles started, for some three days later she was up very early, just after daybreak, according to her account, bringing in the cows from the pasture, when she met 'an old man in ragged cloathes.' This stranger, who must have been one of the leading male witches of the district in disguise, began by telling her that the woman in Stocksfield would change her spirit into a horse and would ride her bridled and bitted. He further added that if she would 'turn to their god' she could be changed, apparently at will, 'to various shapes and likenesses.' 'The old man with ragged cloathes' also explained the various attractions of becoming a witch: how she could ride in the house in empty wooden dishes that had never been wet, and in eggshells; how she could obtain whatever she desired by 'swinging in a rope,' including 'all sorts of dishes of meate and drinke'; and as a final sign that what he said was true, he told her that she should eat a piece of cheese that would appear miraculously by her side when she lay down in a field, with her apron cast over her head. Obviously this strange visitor was a sort of missionary, and the details are interesting as showing the method of enlisting witch recruits. Ann Armstrong however was so overcome by this interview that she fainted away until 6 A.M., when she recovered sufficiently to return to the farm without reporting the affair to any-

one. These fainting fits continued, and some time after Ann Armstrong was seeking sheep ; being tired she sat down, cast her apron over her head and fell asleep, which was a foolish thing to do after the warning given by ' the old man with ragged cloathes.' When she got up she found a piece of cheese lying close to where her head had been, and she took this fragment home, and ultimately she ate it, thus giving herself over into the clutches of the witches indeed ! Then things began to happen. One night before Christmas, ' about the change of the moon,' having lapsed into one of her swoons, ' she saw Ann Forster of Stocksfield,' the woman of the eggs, who came to her bedside with a bridle, and bridled her ' so that she turned into a horse ' ; she was ridden astride by Ann Forster through the winter's night to Riding Mill Bridge End where the witches met. Here Ann Forster dismounted from her unwilling charger, removed the magic bridle, and Ann Armstrong ' stood up in her own shape ' once more. Then the fun began, for the meeting was a gathering of the local coven ; it included Ann Forster of Stocksfield, Ann Dryden a widow of Prudhoe, Lucy Thompson a widow of Mickley, and ten others she did not know, apparently all arriving at the bridge end on horseback. The leader of the gathering was spoken of as ' their protector,' ' a long *black* man riding on a bay galloway.' Ann Armstrong was made to sing, whilst they danced at the bridge end ' in severall shapes, first as hares, then as cats, and in several other disguises.' At the end the meeting broke up, Ann Armstrong was rebridled, and they all rode home, their protector leading the way. Several meetings of this coven followed, and finally poor Ann Armstrong was taken to a meeting at a house called the Riding House, where she saw Ann Forster, Ann Dryden, Lucy Thompson, and the rest of the group or coven. She also saw ' their protector which they called their god sitting at the head of the table in a gold chair, as she thought.' Then followed a witches' banquet, the most sumptuous foods being created out of thin air by a sort of Indian rope trick, the viands sliding down ' a rope hanging over the roome,' when the company touched it three times, and wished in the approved fashion.

On April 3 she said she attended a tremendous banquet of witches at the house of John Newton of the Riding, near Riding Mill, at which there seems to have been no less than five covens of witches or sixty-five persons. Ann Armstrong in her evidence calls them ' coveys; consisting of thirteen persons in every covey.' The feast was attended by her three previous witch friends, and in

addition she recognised Michael Aynsley and his wife Margaret Aynsley of the Riding, Mary Hunter a widow of Birkeneside on the Derwent, Dorothy Green a widow of Edmondbyers, Elizabeth Pickering a widow of Whittonstall, Jane Makepeace wife of William Makepeace a yeoman of New Ridley near Stocksfield, Anthony Hunter a yeoman of Birkeneside, John Whitfield of Edmondbyers, and Ann Whitfield a spinster of the same place, Christopher Dixon and Alice his wife of Mugglesworth Park (probably Muggleswick), Catherine Elliot of Ebchester, 'Elsabeth' Atchinson a widow of the same place, and 'Issabel' Andrew a widow of Crooked Oak on the Derwent near Allensford, with many others, both from Morpeth and other places. By the rope trick they obtained 'boiled capons with silver scrues' (whatever they may have been), 'cheeses, butter, flour, beef, bottles of wines,' and 'a variety of meat.'

At another large party, held at Allensford on the Derwent, everybody danced, 'some in the likenesse of hares, some in the likenesse of catts, others in the likenesse of bees, and some in their own likenesse.' Bees dancing must have been well worth seeing! As usual, the unfortunate Ann Armstrong was made to sing at this gathering, 'and every thirteen of them had a devill with them in sundry shapes. And at the said meeting their particular devill took them that did most evil and danced with them first, and called every of them to account and those that did most evil he maid most of.' A number of the witches at this ball recounted, with evident pride, their devitalising efforts in the districts; all of these acts affecting the health of people or animals, and an extraordinary story it makes. Amongst many, the redoubtable Ann Forster of Stocksfield 'confessed to her own particular devill' that she bewitched the horses of Robert Newton of Stocksfield, and she had power over a child 'of the said Robert Newton's called Issabel, ever since she was four years old, and she is now eight years old, and she is pined away to nothing, and continues soe.'

Towards the middle of April 1673 Ann Armstrong gave the magistrates an account of a further adventure, this time with Jane Baites of Corbridge, 'who came to her in the form of a grey cat, with a bridle hanging on her foote, and she breathed upon her and struck her dead, and bridled her and rid upon her in the name of the devill southward, but the name of the place she does not now remember.' Jane alighted from her unwilling mount at the witches' rendezvous, removed the magic bridle, and Ann Armstrong found herself in the centre of a company close to a bridge end. The devil

'placed a stone in the middle of the company (probably some form of archaic image), and they sat themselves down and bending towards the stone repeated the Lord's Prayer backwards.' Some extremely interesting and ancient ritual is lost here. The devil was 'a little black man and black cloathes,' in other words a carefully disguised leader in the usual black leather garb and adornment.

Sometimes Ann Armstrong was ridden as far afield as Berwick Bridge end, or to Morpeth, where a witch called Ann Baites lived, and where a dance took place in the cellar of the house of Mr. Francis Pye, of Morpeth. This Ann Baites danced with the devil several times at these gatherings, calling him sometimes 'her protector' and sometimes 'her blessed saviour.' Ann Baites of Morpeth was apparently especially gifted, for she turned herself into a cat, a hare, a greyhound, and a bee, 'letting the devill see how many shapes she could turn herself into.' All praise to Ann Baites! Dorothy Green of Edmondbyers, and Mary Hunter of Birkenside were both accused by Ann Armstrong of bewitching a mare belonging to John Marsh of Edesbridge on the Derwent, by flying as a swallow 'above forty times under the mare's belly, and crossed her way before her brest.' This mare died four days afterwards. The swallow is still called the Devil's bird in Northumberland. Ann Armstrong's particular coven, or the coven that tried to enlist her, seems to have been centred at the Riding House, Riding Mill, and it consisted of our friend Ann Forster the egg woman of Stocksfield, Ann Dryden of Prudhoe, Lucy Thompson of Mickley, John Crawforth, William Wright, Elizabeth Pickering of Whittonstall, Ann Usher of Fairly May near Stocksfield, Michael Aynsley and Margaret his wife of the Riding, one Margaret, 'whose surname she knew not,' and three others. In all, the mystic number thirteen; a number occurring over and over again as the total membership of a witches' coven, in England, Scotland, France, and America, of the seventeenth century.

The suspected persons were examined by the county magistrates, and Michael Aynsley and his wife Margaret of the Riding were lodged in prison. All the accused seem to have denied their guilt, and it is probable that they were ultimately acquitted, because no record exists of any sentence. One wonders what happened to Ann Armstrong. It would also be interesting to know if any local tradition still remains of what must have been one of the sensations of the district, at Riding Mill and Stocksfield, over 250 years ago.

We are nearly 300 years too late to investigate the details of this interesting survival from a prehistoric age. We can only look at the crabbed and prejudiced writings of the various scribes and commentators of the seventeenth century, and try to reconstruct from these meagre details some of the main features of this forgotten cult. From a folklore point of view the points of interest in this curious investigation are the apparent mesmeric influences of Ann Forster, 'the egg woman,' and the old ragged man over the unfortunate Ann Armstrong; the disguise in black of the coven leaders, a point also noted in Scottish trials; the light-hearted dancing, usually at bridge ends; the claim to control fertility in the district; and the changing of the individual witches into various animal disguises, such as the hare, cat, dog, mouse, and bee.

The horns, often noted as being worn by the coven leaders in other witch investigations, point to an ancient antlered fertility god whom the Gaulish Kelts called Cernunnos, meaning 'the horned one,' and who may be tentatively equated with our Romano-British deity Silvanus, or Cocidius 'the sacred god of the woods.' The symbolism of the wearing of horns and fertility are intimately connected, and this was indeed a medieval jest not yet entirely forgotten.

The centre of the witchcraft worship in each coven was certainly the coven leader, and his disguise made him more aloof and mysterious than the other witches. The leader is often spoken of as having had a grey beard, and he seems therefore to have usually been an old man, perhaps the reward of long service by seniority.

From Continental and English evidence it would appear that the reincarnation of the fertility god sometimes had two faces, one in front, the other behind; he was called Janicot in Western France, and this aspect of the primitive deity may perhaps be equated with the Roman god Janus, the two-faced deity of doors and entrances. That doorways were sometimes taboo for witches seems probable, for their conventional departure by the chimney points to this forgotten taboo and to the deity Janus.

In the keep of the castle at Newcastle-upon-Tyne is preserved a very fine mantel and overmantel of carved oak, formerly in the Bee Hive Inn in the Sandhill, Newcastle. The overmantel is divided into three panels. The central panel shows the apotheosis of King James I. James died in 1625. On the dexter side is Fortune, on the sinister side is a female figure holding in her left hand a head made up of two faces back to back in the fashion of Janus. The

connexion of James I with the persecution of witches is well known, and his book on witches remains as one of the classics of witchcraft. It is possible that this double head is meant to represent the lost god of the witches known of and held up to derision by the loyal artist as the King departs heavenwards.

That witches indulged in flights on broomsticks through the air is a popular belief, but there is very little evidence that this belief existed 300 years ago ; the witches arrived at their gatherings or coven meetings on horseback, or on foot, in the normal way.

Their knowledge of drugs was apparently very great, and the administration of potent charms of this type may have easily given initiates the feeling of levitation so often felt in dreams, and practised by Alice in 'Through the Looking Glass.' The effect and influence of mesmerism also may account for the extraordinary adventures of some of the witches, not the least of these being the pathetic, if treacherous, Ann Armstrong of Birksnook in Northumberland.

And so we bid farewell to something so ancient and so deeply rooted in the past as to be almost unintelligible, except to the analytical mind of the anthropologist or the dull antiquary. Yet in its way the old worship is part of all of us, for in the darkest corners of the human mind there often lurk, unnoticed or suppressed, the phantoms of past beliefs.

ON RINGS RETURNED.

BY SIR CHARLES OMAN, M.P., F.S.A.

It is seldom that the columns of our breakfast-table newspaper present us with an incident which seems to have come straight out of the Middle Ages, and furnishes material for all manner of forebodings and morals. On Tuesday, September 25, the good folk of Liverpool celebrated the marriage of their city to the sea in the old Venetian fashion, by casting a ring into the waves outside the estuary of the Mersey. On Thursday, September 27, the crew of the trawler *Salvor* fished up the identical ring from the depths, and brought it back to Liverpool. They offered it first to the Receiver of Wrecks, and then to the Lady Mayoress, neither of whom seemed inclined to accept it, and finally they endeavoured to find whether the chief patron of the pageant would like to have it back. Should it be placed in the city museum as a relic, or consigned again to the sea for longer marriage settlement?

This surely is a repetition of half a dozen legends of the Ring Returned, which extend from the Histories of Herodotus to fourteenth-century Venice. But in every one of them something fateful and important came from the reappearance of the jewel that had disappeared. It was not bandied about from the Receiver of Wrecks to the mayoral parlour. What ought to happen in Liverpool in order to round off a dramatic story?

Of Herodotus' tale of Polycrates all students of history know the outline. The ever-fortunate tyrant of Samos found himself so astonishingly happy in every one of his ventures, that he thought it wise to break his luck, or propitiate Nemesis or 'the envy of the gods,' by depriving himself of his most cherished possession. Wherefore he cast into the sea his great emerald ring. Nemesis would not be propitiated. A few days later a fisherman, having caught a fish of monstrous size, presented it to the tyrant. When the chief cook was preparing the delicacy for the royal table, the ring was found inside the fish and duly returned to its owner. 'I cannot break my good luck,' complained Polycrates; and went on prospering, till a treacherous Persian Satrap lured him to an interview, kidnapped him, and put him to death.

This has the true Greek flavour. Not less characteristic of the mentality of the Middle Ages is the tale of St. Edward the Confessor and his returned ring. That pious but thriftless monarch, quite

early in his reign, had been giving away all his money to deserving mendicants, till he found his pouch for the moment empty. Then there approached him a venerable old man, who prayed that he too might share in the royal bounty. Vexed to find that he had nothing more to give, Edward drew off his golden ring, the only remaining object of value about his person, and bestowed it with his blessing on the petitioner. More than twenty years later, in A.D. 1065, two English pilgrims from the border town of Ludlow lost themselves in a Palestinian desert somewhere between Joppa and Jerusalem—locality uncertain. To them, when they were benighted and well-nigh starving, there appeared an old man of majestic aspect, who led them back to the highway, and then addressed them with surprising words. He was St. John the Evangelist, and a great lover of their good King Edward. Long years back he had tested the king's liberality, by presenting himself as a beggar and craving alms. The Confessor had given him a ring, and this he now produced and bade the pilgrims take it back to London. And with it they were to give King Edward the message that within six months of his receipt of the ring he would join his patron in a happier world. The pilgrims had a return voyage of almost miraculous facility, duly visited their sovereign, and gave him the summons of the saint and the golden ring. Edward recognised it at once, accepted the warning, and hastened to make his peace with God and man, and to hurry on the completion of Westminster Abbey, which was finished as he lay on his death-bed. He died on January 5, 1066, in confident expectation of heavenly bliss—as this story runs. There is another tale which gives him a less happy end, and speaks of dire vaticinations which he uttered with his last breath, as to the ills which were to come on England in the approaching year. Be this as it may, you may see in St. John's Chapel of Ludlow Church a wonderful fifteenth-century glass window, duly setting forth the history of the two pilgrims, their interview with St. John in the desert, and their return to the king. When they reached home they founded the Ludlow Pilgrims' Guild, which endured till the troublous days of Henry VIII.

Moving on to A.D. 1340, when Bartolomeo Gradenigo was Doge of Venice, we have a far more startling and complicated legend of a returned ring from the City of the Lagoons. A tempest, never paralleled in human memory, was sweeping up the Adriatic from the south-east, and driving the sea awash over the outer line of sand-banks which shelter the inner waters from the turmoil outside. Even within that protected area the waves were running high,

swept westward by the wind, and flooding the Riva degli Schiavoni. All wise men were under cover, and nothing was stirring on the water. When dusk was falling, and the tempest seemed ever to be growing worse, a highly respectable gondolier was lying alone in his craft on the Molo by the Piazzetta, all his comrades having drawn up side canals for shelter. To him, coming from the direction of St. Mark's, there appeared a dim but commanding figure, who hailed him and said that he must be put across the water to the island of San Giorgio Maggiore, where he had to visit a friend. The gondolier remonstrated with energy, and cried that no one but a madman would face the sea that was now running. Nevertheless, the unknown persisted in his demand, assuring the man that the journey would be safe and the pay good. Yielding, he hardly knew why, for his reason forbade compliance, the gondolier took the stranger aboard, and found himself under San Giorgio in a moment, though the wind was against him and the water choppy to a degree. Waiting at the landing-place in front of the church of San Giorgio was a young gentleman in armour. To the dismay of the gondolier his passenger did not step ashore, but beckoned the soldier to join him in the boat; and when he was embarked there came the insane order to put across the mile and more of tempestuous water which separates San Giorgio from the long sandbank of the Lido. The gondola must draw up under the church of San Niccolo, at the north end of that island. This looked like certain death, and the gondolier again refused to start, and again found himself compelled to do so by the hypnotic influence of the stranger. Still more miraculous than his first short transit was the passage to the Lido—the gondola seemed to cut a lane of calm water through a field of endless waves, and was close to San Niccolo in no time. A cloaked ecclesiastic was waiting at the landing-stage before it; he, too, entered the boat at the beck of the original passenger. And now came the order to row for the open sea north of the Lido, where the lagoons communicate with the Adriatic by the narrow passage between the two forts of Sant Andrea and San Niccolo. By this time the gondolier was past arguing, and saw that he was dealing with something supernatural. If he had escaped the past terrors, his employer could take him through any possible danger. So for the passage to the sea he rowed, though the waves were racing in, and the whole Adriatic seemed moving on toward Venice. In mid-channel, riding in upon the flood, was an immense dark carrack or galleon of fantastic shape and sinister aspect, with a wave of portentous size towering over it behind. Right in front of it the

gondola halted, and the three passengers, rising from their bench simultaneously, cried aloud in the name of God forbidding the ship to come farther. At once its decks and spars were covered by a crowd of angry and hideous shapes, threatening and howling. But at the third exorcism the great vessel vanished in a flash of lightning, and was gone. The wind began to fall, the waves ceased to break in, and the passenger directed the gondolier to turn back and drop his two friends at their homes. In a minute the ecclesiastic had landed at San Niccolo. Within twenty minutes the soldier had disembarked at San Giorgio, and a moment later the gondola, in almost smooth water, was at the Piazzetta. Here the original voyager descended, and handed a big gold ring 'about five ducats in weight' to the gondolier. 'Know,' he said, 'that the devil had plotted to destroy Venice this night, by rolling in all the Adriatic across the sandbanks. But this was revealed to me, Saint Mark, who am the patron of the city; wherefore I have gone with my friends St. George and St. Nicholas to stay the waters, as you have seen; and now there is no danger. But to-morrow morning go to the Doge and give him this ring, and when he asks what it is, bid him search in my shrine with the Patriarch and the custodian, and they will find that my great gold ring is gone, and that you have it, and have brought it back by my orders. And bid them not be ungrateful to me, nor to my friends, nor to you.'

The gondolier obeyed, and all befell as the saint had said. The Doge was astonished, the Patriarch recognised the ring, which was returned to its place; and the Doge and Council ordained a great festival of thanksgiving for the preservation of the city by St. Mark, and duly made the gondolier a State pensioner with a liberal allowance. And those who visit the Venice Accademia will see a lovely picture by Paris Bordone, in which the weather-beaten gondolier hands the big gold ring to an astonished Doge and a mildly interested Council.

This is the tallest story of returned rings that I know. Wherefore I will not tell of other rings that came back in unexpected fashion, such as the ring which Portia gave to Bassanio, and Bassanio to the mysterious lawyer. Nor of the ring given unwittingly to Venus by the incautious ball-player, and the difficulty which he had in getting it back. But what ought to happen to the Liverpool ring? Something exciting is demanded by all literary precedent. And I am sure that to be placed in a museum or dropped back into the sea is not exciting enough.

G. P. AND THE LEOPARD WOMAN.

BY JOHN HORNE.

BRUCE FALKNER of the K.A.R. surveyed a group engaged in the sundown occupation of talk *cum* drinks at the end of the Club verandah. There was no mistaking the broad back of the District Police Commissioner—known to his intimates as ‘the Policeman’—flanked, as usual, by the rotund figure of ‘Fatty’ Gordon, and the thin one of the Airman. A trio of unfailing gaiety, but to-night there was something repellent about the east coast and all its works, and of course they would talk of nothing else. Falkner was about to pass on, but already they had seen him or, to be precise, Gordon had.

‘Hullo, Bruce,’ he called, ‘you’re the very man we want.’

Falkner hesitated. To anyone else he would have made an excuse, but he liked Gordon, who, in spite of his bulk, was a good sportsman and very efficient at his job, which job was ‘cloves.’ Besides, Gordon had worked with G. P.

‘Come on,’ insisted the others, ‘we won’t talk shop.’

Falkner smiled unbelievably, but moved towards them. ‘If that’s a promise,’ he said, ‘I’ll bet drinks all round that it will be broken within the next ten minutes.’

‘As a matter of fact, we were right away from Africa,’ remarked the Airman. ‘Fatty tried to start about his precious island, but we sat on him mercilessly.’

‘What do you think they wanted to talk about?’ asked Gordon in an aggrieved tone.

‘No idea,’ said Falkner.

‘A rotten film our highbrow Airman dragged me to in London when we were on leave. He’s mad about it. Wild animals in Burmah or Siam, with a few natives running about—the whole thing faked, of course.’

‘Pay no attention to him,’ laughed the Airman. ‘It’s a unique film, and a perfectly straight one, with wonderful pictures of monkeys and bears and tigers, not to speak of a herd of elephants.’

‘It sounds good enough,’ said Falkner, ‘but to tell you the truth, when one has lived among wild animals as much as I have, they never seem quite right on the screen.’

Gordon burst out laughing. 'You infernal old big game hunter! Never content away from your beastly jungle! Now, what interested me . . .'

'You couldn't have been interested,' interrupted the Policeman. 'There were no pictures of Pemba.'

But Gordon was not to be drawn. 'What interested me,' he went on, 'was the leopard.'

Falkner looked at him curiously. 'Why the leopard?' he asked.

'I don't know exactly,' Gordon replied. 'There was only one picture of it padding through the long grass, but it made me feel uncomfortable—reminded me of the tales G. P. used to tell. He was with me in Pemba, you know—agent for Binney & Pomace, the Eastern trading people.'

'There he goes again,' exclaimed the Airman in jubilation. 'Arrant shop—and within three minutes—that's three and a third drinks!'

'I only saw G. P. once,' said the Policeman when the laughter had subsided, 'and he seemed a very intelligent sort of fellow.'

Gordon nodded. 'Intelligent! I should think he was!—but the wrong kind of intelligence. I lived in the same bungalow with him, so I ought to know. He frightened me sometimes.'

'Poor old Fatty!' said the Airman. 'What did he do?'

'Things you'll never do if you live to be a thousand,' retorted Gordon. 'In the first place he would drink a bottle of whisky most nights, and wake up in the morning as fresh as a daisy. I can see him now, standing outside my mosquito net at the first streak of dawn and puffing away at his pipe with the face of a cherub—while I felt like nothing on earth.'

'Morning in Pemba!' announced the irrepressible Airman. But Falkner remained serious. 'What frightened you?' he asked.

Gordon finished his drink, and when he spoke there was a change in his manner. 'It's hard to explain,' he said. 'For one thing, although G. P. was very young—barely twenty-four, I think—and had only been three years in the country, he seemed to have forgotten that England ever existed, just like those queer old stagers one hears about. He was a bit of a poet, too, with a way of describing things that held me spellbound. Nothing very hair raising about that, you'll say, but it was only the beginning. He got very keen on studying the natives. Those were his good days. With the whisky bottle beside him, and his eyes shining through the

smoke of his old Dunhill, he would talk for hours about the different tribes and their languages—most of which he spoke fluently—and their customs and witchcraft and medicine men; and as to juju, there was nothing in the whole outfit he didn't know. Then there was his habit of going away for days at a time—disappearing clean off the map, nobody knew where—and returning without a word of explanation. Once he stayed away a week, and came back absolutely exhausted. 'Thank goodness, I've got it to work at last!' was his only remark. And when I asked what he meant, he replied, 'The charm of invisibility, old man. It takes it out of you.'

'Invisibility!' echoed the Airman. 'What nonsense!'

Gordon nodded. 'That's what I tried to think, but G. P. wouldn't let me. He explained how he had made friends with a witch doctor—done him a good turn of some sort—and out of gratitude the fellow had been teaching him magic for months, increasing the dose till at last he knew how to make people believe they could not see him. Of course the natives do perform tricks of that kind, but G. P. declared that he had actually been able to attend a meeting of the most secret of their sects, where discovery would have meant certain death. It may be all nonsense, but it got on my nerves.'

'Did you ever see him make use of the magic he had learned?' asked Falkner.

'Only once, to my knowledge. We had been discussing the native method of hypnotism, and G. P. declared he could put a man into a trance as well as any of them. According to him, it was easily done with such weak-minded people. I pointed to a coolie, and he looked at him and began to concentrate or whatever one calls it. Well, at first nothing happened, but after a few minutes the man suddenly flopped down and went fast asleep. Nothing I could think of would wake him, and G. P. refused to give the show away by doing so himself. "Leave it to the natives," he said. So they fetched the women, and one of them covered the man's face with some white paste, and spat on his eyes till he came to.'

'I've seen that,' said the Policeman. 'At Tabora one of my men went into a trance. The others said he was bewitched, and brought certain women who treated him in exactly the same way. It's curious what an important part the women seem to play.'

The Airman chuckled. 'That fact isn't confined to African tribes. Why, in India I knew a woman . . .'

'Oh, shut up!' protested Gordon. 'We've heard about her

before. This is a different kind of tale. . . . Well, I was going to say that the only people G. P. seemed to fear were these witch women. He declared they used magic far beyond his knowledge and that some of them possessed the rare power of dual personality.'

'The greatest of all their secrets,' said the Policeman with growing interest, while even the Airman grew grave.

'What is dual personality?' he asked.

Gordon hesitated. He did not care about theories, and felt that the discussion was getting beyond his depth. 'I was never very clear about it,' he said at last. 'G. P. used to talk by the hour, but he got so excited that I could hardly follow him. It appears, however, that some natives—especially the women I just mentioned—can turn themselves into animals. They take the form of a leopard for choice, and do a lot of damage among the livestock of neighbouring tribes. Sometimes they even kill men, but more often women, though I don't know why that should be.'

'I think I do,' said the Policeman. 'You see, the women continually go into the jungle or to the river to fetch wood and water.'

'That's true enough,' agreed Gordon, 'but the curious part is that when the leopard has finished killing goats or people, or whatever its victims may be, it becomes a woman again and returns innocently to the village.'

This statement was too much for the Airman's composure. 'Cut it out, boy,' he ordered derisively. 'We're not in the Dark Ages—even on the east coast—and, anyhow, these extraordinary tales never seem to get beyond hearsay. Now, I want to *see*.'

The Policeman raised his hand in protest. 'You'll never do that up in the clouds,' he declared. 'In Africa you must walk on your flat feet if you want to see. Go on, Gordon.'

'There's nothing more to tell,' said Gordon, 'but you must see that the whole thing got on my nerves. If not, try a few months in Pemba with a man who practises magic all day and drinks whisky all night. The marvel was that, in spite of everything, G. P. never neglected his firm's business. I'll give him full marks for that, though in other respects things were growing worse when I came away. His one idea was to find a leopard woman and learn her secret, and he talked of Nagomba, in the wild country this side of Tanganyika, as the place to try. If ever he gets there you'll hear something sensational. By the way, does anybody know where G. P. is now?'

During the discussion Falkner had remained silent. Magic! Witchcraft! In the Tropics the border line between reality and fantasy grew blurred more easily than most people cared to admit, and it was a bad business when a white man crossed it. He drew a bundle of letters from his pocket. Possibly their contents had been meant for him alone, but to reveal them might save other adventurers from disaster.

'I can enlighten you as to G. P.'s whereabouts,' he said quietly. 'At the present moment he is on his way to England.'

'Home!' exclaimed Gordon in surprise. 'That's news. I didn't know you had met G. P.'

'I've known him since he was a boy,' replied Falkner. 'You mentioned Nagomba just now. Well, he wrote these letters from there. I'll read them if you like. As to being sensational, you must judge for yourselves, but they certainly carry on Gordon's story.'

There was a murmur of assent, and Falkner unfolded the letters. 'They start on June 30,' he said, 'and follow each other like a diary.'

'Dear Bruce . . . This is a God-forsaken place, in other words, I am the only white man within a hundred miles—and my supply of whisky has gone astray in the jungle. Pambu is with me. He's my boy, a wonderful factotum and absolutely devoted. You will wonder why on earth the firm sent me here, but as a matter of fact they didn't. I came on my own, for reasons—tremendous reasons—that the firm will certainly fail to understand. Gordon used to think me mad in Pemba, though he was too decent to say so. I wonder what he would think now? Leave is due in a month, but I doubt if I'll take it. P.S.—The whisky has turned up.

'July 1st. Letters are a rotten means of communicating one's ideas, but I want you to have these, in case I don't come back. For one reason, though, I *am* glad to write. You and Gordon cannot try to dissuade me, as you would do if you were on the spot, for I'm determined to discover the truth about this dual personality—zoomorphism is its highbrow name—the power of a human being to take the form of an animal and return to human form. I've mastered much of their infernal juju, but this is a mystery unfathomed by any white man. Think of what it means—for I'm convinced that it exists—the power of living the life of the jungle, of sharing its joys and dangers. Why, it's simply evolution, backwards and then forwards, doing in an instant what Darwin imagined to need millions of years. Can't you see the fascination of the

problem—to know whether an animal can have a human mind—whether memories can come back from the other state? There are gruesome rumours, of course. One makes it essential to bring a stillborn child to life, and when it opens its mouth, bite off its tongue. There's black magic for you! But I do know that women are the greatest adepts. They are called leopard women, because that is the form they generally take, but nobody knows who they are—in fact, it is taboo even to discuss the matter. Pambu has just informed me that the Nagos are cannibals, periodically, you understand. He also said that there had been no victim for a long time, so I hope they won't take a sudden liking to me! Thank goodness, I can depend on Pambu if there is trouble.

'July 10th. There is an important juju house here, or rather it's a compound surrounded by a thorn hedge, with a sacred tree and a big hut in the centre. None of the Nagos dare approach the place, except to bring gifts to the spirits who are supposed to inhabit the hut, guarded by a hideous old witch-doctor and a priestess. Wandering outside the compound, I managed to catch sight of the lady as she took in some offerings. She's young, taller than most of the women, with regular features—rather of the Arab type—and wonderful grey eyes tinged with yellow. I've never seen a native—or European for that matter—with such eyes. In a moment she was gone, leaving me with a sense of attraction, not physical, but something I can't describe. Though the place often seems deserted, the witch-doctor is always on the watch. He's the most malevolent looking creature you can imagine, and very wideawake, but I shall find a way to speak to the priestess, whatever the risk. Good old Pambu! His announcement of the whisky's arrival has given me a brain wave. To-morrow an offering of spirits goes to the spirit of the juju house, and then, unless I'm much mistaken, things will begin to happen.

'July 12th. I can hardly believe my luck. She is sitting in my hut, weaving flowers into her fuzzy hair and watching intently while I write. Her name is Ulana, which means "the greatest witch," so it really looks as if I were on the right track at last. This is how it happened. With a bottle of whisky under my arm, I went to the sacred compound and struck the drum hanging at the entrance. Of course the chances were against Ulana appearing alone, but she did, and—curiously enough—my presence seemed to cause her no surprise. For a moment her gaze pierced me through and through as if searching for something, then she asked very quietly what it was I needed. "Knowledge," I replied, "I have travelled many days to seek you out."

"The white man wishes to learn of my wisdom?" she said. "It is well, but not here. When night falls I will come."

'The eagerness of her consent didn't exactly please me. After all, she is high priestess in a cannibal village, and one never knows what treachery may be afoot, so I tried to explain that there would probably be trouble if she were seen going to my hut. At that she grew thoughtful and whispered, pointing in the direction of the juju house, "All others I can make blind, but against M'Kulu no charms avail." I guessed that M'Kulu must be her hideous opposite number, and took my opportunity at a run, with a blessing for the man who invented whisky. "Make M'Kulu drink this," I said, holding up the bottle, "and for many hours he also will see nothing." Once more her eyes met mine, and the gold in them danced as she turned away. Of course I realise that for a solitary white man to stand up against a cannibal witch-doctor is a risky business, but so far everything has worked according to plan, and M'Kulu is blind to the world to-night, while Ulana sits here, never speaking and never taking her eyes off me. Being watched is usually an unpleasant sensation, but now I find it wonderfully soothing. And there is something else—I never saw her come into the hut. Believe it or not, she made herself invisible to me. It's all the more strange, because at that moment I happened to be extra wideawake—with a feeling as if some wild animal were prowling round the hut—and then suddenly she was there. It's the brink of knowledge. The question is, shall I have the courage to go on?

'July 18th. Her eyes fascinate me. Their yellow glint is like powdered gold falling through water. In bright light the iris dwindles to a pin's point—like a cat's—and the smaller it is the more it holds me. After the first visit she kept away for days, but she's here again this evening, and I know now that she has the power of zoomorphism. I'll tell you what happened. This morning the headman asked me to go out the next night of full moon after a leopard that has been causing trouble. It has carried off several goats and killed a girl at the edge of the jungle, and the people are panic-stricken, declaring it to be a leopard woman. You can imagine my feelings at that bit of news! Of course I accepted—it would have been impossible to do otherwise—though even then I didn't like the idea of shooting the leopard. The headman said that after watching for two nights in a tree, he had speared the beast, but the grass was very long and it got away with his spear-head in its left shoulder. Well, just now I was thinking drowsily about all these things and watching Ulana curled up at my feet, when suddenly something roused me into full consciousness. She had come in a sort of mantle of brightly coloured grass cloth which intrigued me because native women don't wear such things, and as I stared at it the mantle slipped down, showing a great wound, still fresh and bleeding, behind her left shoulder. For a moment I

was too surprised to think, then the headman's story—the tales I had heard of leopard women—my own suspicions about Ulana—came rushing to my brain, filling the blanks like the last pieces of a jig-saw puzzle. Instinctively I made myself devil's advocate, trying to use every argument against my own conviction. After all, the wound might be a knife wound. A priestess must certainly have enemies, or M'Kulu himself might have attacked her in a fit of jealousy. But no arguments would hold. This was a spear wound if ever there was one—a fresh spear wound in the left shoulder—and the leopard had been wounded in the left shoulder, . . . *and escaped!* “Ulana,” I cried, catching her by the arm, “how did this happen?” She drew away and covered her shoulder, but I had seen enough. . . . I *knew* now. “A thief came in the night,” she answered. “His knife was sharp.” “A thief's knife?” I said. “Say rather the headman's spear. Where were you two nights since, O Ulana?” My idea was to show that I had guessed her secret, but the question was useless, for she only smiled with her eyes fixed on mine. I don't know how long we had been looking at each other in silence—it seemed an eternity—when suddenly a deep-toned drum began to beat in the distance, and Ulana sprang to her feet in terror. “The temple drum!” she whispered. “M'Kulu seeks me in vain. . . . In the forest . . . I will come.” And before I could speak she was gone.

Falkner paused for a moment and looked up. The expression on the faces round him showed neither conviction nor disbelief, but rather an expectant tolerance of the adventures of G. P. and his leopard woman. In Europe these would be considered the fantastic product of a mind unbalanced by climate, drink, and overstudy of the occult—with stress upon the second reason—but in Africa people learn to respect what they cannot understand, and so three Englishmen sat silent while Falkner took up the last of the letters.

‘This one has no date,’ he said, ‘but it was written the evening before I reached Nagomba, that is to say, on July 26.’

‘The 26th!’ exclaimed the Airman. ‘Why, I flew over the place that very afternoon, a good deal lower than was safe, too, with nowhere to land within fifty miles. There was a great fuss going on, one of those big ceremonial dances—you know the kind of thing—an endless chain of men painted white and women with grass kilts like ballet skirts, twisting and turning in a mad sort of follow my leader. You must have been quite near.’

‘I wasn't far away,’ said Falkner, ‘. . . fortunately . . . but you'll hear about that presently. First listen to G. P.'s letter.’

'I'm making an effort to put everything on paper before . . . well, while I can. Last night was full moon, and I went into the forest with the headman and several others, and of course Pambu. As we left, the big drum in the juju compound began to boom slowly, just as it did on the night when Ulana was here—just as it is doing now. Will nothing stop the cursed thing? I think I'll go mad with its measured thud hammering into my brain. Mad! Why don't they try that drum in America? It would be a splendid idea for the third degree. . . . We went on and on—I don't know how far—till at last the headman stopped at the edge of a curved open space surrounded by dense undergrowth, and helped me up into the last tree of a group that stuck out from the rest like a cape. There was a platform among the branches, just big enough for me and my rifle, and so placed that it lay in shadow with bright moonlight on three sides. I wanted to keep Pambu, but the headman said it was the custom to watch alone, so I didn't insist. Then they all went away, leaving me with only the faint drum beats—you know what a distance they carry—for company. Suddenly the drum beats stopped. At first the silence seemed a relief, like a weight lifted from my brain, but soon I began to realise that silence in the jungle was far worse than any drumming. Of course I had read about it and been told how awful it was, but no description could come anywhere near the horror of reality, with its dead emptiness working on every nerve. Through what seemed ages of torture my only thought was of Ulana. Would she come, as she had promised? Would a leopard come—a leopard with a spear wound in its shoulder?

'In spite of all that had happened, the thing seemed incredible, yet something told me that it was true and that my own strength of mind—my absolute belief must prove it. With throbbing brain I watched the moon move slowly across the open glade, touching new places with shafts of light that pierced the wall of foliage till at last, from a spot of darkness no moonbeam could penetrate, two eyes like great burning opals, looked out. Mechanically I grasped my rifle, and as I did so the brightness of the eyes faded and a big leopard moved into the open. After that things happened so quickly that much is blotted out of my memory. I remember standing on the ground beneath the tree while the leopard came nearer and nearer, watching me with its yellow eyes . . . Ulana's eyes. I hadn't got my rifle—it must have been left in the tree—and somehow I didn't care. It was as if my mind had ceased to work, leaving my body incapable of movement or fear or any sensation. But when the beast was almost within reach, an irresistible impulse arose in me to feel its shoulder for the spear wound and prove that Ulana had kept her word. For, of course, the

leopard was Ulana. How, otherwise, could I be standing there unharmed? To need further proof seemed shameful, but I simply had to do it—want of faith—the old story. And now the game's up . . . for my hands were stretched out and had almost touched the silky coat, when suddenly M'Kulu ran out of the undergrowth and stood with his hunting spear poised to throw. Like a fool I raised my arm to stop him, thinking that he wanted to save me from the leopard, but I paid the price of my foolishness, for in a second the shining spearhead had made a silver streak against the black wall of trees and buried itself in my side, while the shaft quivered and then dropped, tearing the twisted barbs upwards in a great gash—like the one on Ulana's shoulder—like—well, it's no good worrying—I'll never know now. Perhaps . . . if I had kept my rifle . . . but, as a matter of fact I would never have used it, for at the very moment the spear struck me the leopard sprang at M'Kulu, and his scream of terror rang in my ears as I fainted.

'I'm not delirious, but everything is all muzzy, from my wound I suppose. Oh, hell take that drum . . . and the stamping of the dancers! They have been at it all the afternoon, coming closer each time they pass round the hut. I know what that means . . . , you'll never get this letter . . . but I must go on with it all the same. Pambu has disappeared. I haven't seen him for hours. Goodness knows how he got me back here, but he did, for when I woke up he was squatting by my bed. And now even he is gone, a rotten show—for I trusted Pambu. Perhaps they've done him in, as a sort of *hors-d'œuvre*—pleasant idea. Something keeps prowling about outside. It makes no sound, but I know it's there. Bruce, old man, this is the end. When the thing comes I'm going to write down. . . . '

Falkner folded up the letters and replaced them in his pocket. 'That's the end,' he said, 'so far as G. P.'s story is concerned. Now for mine. Pambu reached my camp on the evening of the 26th, in a state of abject fear, jabbering away incoherently, and, I think, on purpose, for as soon as my Nyassas and Wanyamwesis had been sent out of earshot, he suddenly calmed down and said that the Nagos were going to kill his master next morning. Then he shut up like an oyster, and neither threats nor promises could get another word out of him. Poor Pambu! As it turned out, he had good reason to be afraid, but I only realised that to reach G. P. in time I must be quick. Twelve miles through jungle at night takes some doing, but just before dawn we were outside the village. For nearly two hours the drum had been throbbing in the distance, and I agree with every word G. P. says about it. That particular beat, I

discovered afterwards, is only used on occasions of human sacrifice, but even without that knowledge its effect on my nerves in the hot darkness was decidedly unpleasant. The huts at the edge of the jungle appeared to be deserted, and, fearing the worst, we hurried on to the big open space in the centre of the village, where a silent crowd—the same white-painted men and grass-skirted women the Airman told us about just now, with the addition of a group of witch-doctors with hideous masks—squatted on the ground with their backs to us, glistening like silver in the twilight. Beyond them a semicircle remained empty in front of one of the huts, to which Pambu, who had never left my side for an instant, pointed excitedly. I didn't need to be told that the hut was G. P.'s, and from the appearance of the crowd he was probably still inside it. The next few seconds were like a football scrum. I had just given the order to get round and occupy the hut from behind, when the sun rose, and with it every man in Nagomba. Brandishing their spears the white-painted warriors rushed forward, while the witch-doctors yelled like fury to the accompaniment of drumming that had doubled time at the same moment. To try and reach the back of the hut now seemed hopeless, so we charged with the rest, and—though it may sound incredible—they were so intent upon the business in hand, that we were in the front line before they noticed us. And then it didn't matter, for suddenly the whole crowd stopped dead, and a drawn-out gasp rose from its ranks as a leopard stalked slowly out of the hut and stood facing us.

'I was as much taken aback as anyone, though in my case fear for G. P. soon swamped every other thought, while the witch-doctors must have raged at the probable loss of their victim. However that may be, a shower of spears were on their way when I fired, but luckily my bullet got there first—through the neck and lung—a dead shot. With a noise between a cough and a snarl the leopard collapsed, lay absolutely still for perhaps ten seconds, and then, to my intense amazement, rose with a supreme effort and disappeared in the doorway of the hut. Ordering my askaris to keep the crowd back at all costs, I dashed after it, expecting—goodness knows what I expected—but it was certainly not the sight that met my eyes.

'G. P. sprawled on a camp bed against the farther wall, and, stretched on the floor beside him, head between paws like a great dog guarding its master, lay the leopard. So extraordinary was its position that I moved forward with caution, but it was dead right enough. At first I thought G. P. must be dead too, but

found to my relief that he was breathing very faintly, with the sweat rolling off him as it does when fever is going down. There was a horrible wound in his side, so inflamed that poison seemed the only explanation—anyhow it sent me back to the doorway, shouting for my medicine chest. Then came the second shock of that eventful morning. With the exception of my men not a soul was to be seen. The crowd had vanished and the drum had ceased beating, leaving the place deserted and silent, with something in its steamy emptiness that made me want to get out of it quick. An askari came with my things, and as he put them on G.P.'s table I caught sight of the letters. You've heard what he wrote, so you can imagine my feelings, with him lying there unconscious, and his leopard—or was it his leopard woman?—taking her last guard at his feet. The whole thing seemed a mad brainstorm . . . and yet . . . Pulling myself together, I bent down and felt the animal's left shoulder, and there was a wound, a long jagged gash—healed over—but otherwise exactly as G. P. had seen it on Ulana's shoulder. It may sound absurd, but it was all I could do to conquer the fear creeping over me, fear of the place, of the silence, of dabbling in things white men should let alone. Action was the only remedy, and I clung to that like a drowning man. I sent for the headman and told him that he must produce M'Kulu, dead or alive. He said nothing, but led the way into the forest, with four of my men round him to see that there was no hanky-panky. After about two miles we came to the open glade, which I recognised at once from G. P.'s description. His rifle and cartridges were still on the platform in the tree, and when I had taken them the headman pointed to the half devoured remains of a hideous old black lying at the edge of the scrub. "M'Kulu," he said, and I knew that he spoke the truth.

"And Ulana?" I asked. Instantly every vestige of expression left the headman's face. "Ulana . . ." he repeated, staring at me stonily, "Ulana died . . . to-day . . . at sunrise." The words were spoken deliberately, without the least feeling, but their effect upon me was to revive every doubt I had tried to stifle. You see, I killed the leopard at sunrise . . . and G.P.'s letters lay fresh in my pocket. Coincidence, of course, but mighty strange coincidence. For a moment I wanted to question further—to try and convince myself that the man was lying—but what was the use? The curtain separating black from white would only become more impenetrable than ever. No, I had to realise that my years of

experience led no further than G.P.'s daring, and that the mystery of the leopard woman must remain . . . for somebody else to fathom. The askaris could not understand why I refused to let them skin the leopard for me, and I don't blame them, for it was a perfect specimen and beautifully marked . . . anyhow, we left it where it lay.

'An hour later I got G. P. away in a litter—he was still unconscious—and had just reached the jungle when that damned drum started beating again, with frantic yells and shouting from the juju compound. Only then I noticed that Pambu was missing, and at once guessed what must have happened. It was a hopeless situation. I knew that to go into the village a second time with my tiny force and G. P. on my hands would have been madness, and besides, it was too late to save the victim. The only thing was to carry on, which I did. Of course nothing was ever proved, but from evidence that reached me afterwards, I'm sure the Nagos did get Pambu,—spirited him away somehow during my absence with the headman. It's curious that I never missed him, nor could any of my men remember when he had last been seen. Poor wretch! He saved G. P.'s life and paid for it with his own.'

'A near thing,' said the Policeman, after a pause. 'Home is the only cure for a case like that—a long spell of home. I suppose he didn't tell you what came into the hut—after he had stopped writing?'

'No,' replied Falkner. 'He asked if I got the letters, and in his state of weakness I thought it best not to question further. By the way, there was no poison in his wound, and I think I know the reason. You see, poisoned meat would have been no good to the Nagos.'

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'Yes—if he keeps off juju,' said Gordon. 'It's an extraordinary adventure, though to my mind the evidence about the leopard woman seems far from conclusive.'

For a moment there was silence. Then the man who flies above jungles—and juju—broke it.

'You amaze me, Fatty,' he remarked profoundly. 'Haven't you learned that in Africa nothing is conclusive? What about another drink?'

A GREAT MAN, UNHONOURED BY FAME.

BY GEORGE WODEN.

'JAMES WATT invented the steam, and George Stephenson invented the engine,' wrote a little girl friend of mine in a school composition. She has grown into a mighty fine lady, and, when I reminded her the other day, she confessed that she had forgotten it. Amused, she added another confession: 'I'm not sure that I know very much more to-day.'

Neither do the rest of us. How many of us know the following fact, for instance? It is interesting enough. James Watt's patent was only for the improvement of steam engines. Thirty years before his first engine was built at Soho, a steam engine had been erected in the Black Country to pump water out of a flooded colliery. Savary, I fancy, was the inventor, and the engine failed owing to the steam pressure being imperfectly controlled. But who knows anything of Savary—and who cares? It is much jollier to picture Watt and his mother's kettle, or Newton startled by the apple falling on his bare head, and, hey presto! steam engines, laws of gravitation! There's magic for you. We don't really want to see how the conjurer hides the rabbit; there is more fun in seeing it come magically out of the hat.

The fact is, we all know a few things thoroughly, being driven to such knowledge by business, and occasionally by that curiosity or chance which introduces us to our hobbies. Outside these cultivated gardens we wander in a pleasant common land of ignorance, enjoying the walk, the scenery, the air, but not bothering about details in what we see. Facts are to be found, like pressed and dried flowers which have lost their beauty, in the encyclopedia, and we smile, with the indulgence of the sane for the eccentric, at those who live with the encyclopedia and the dictionary. Such folk are always men. The ladies seem to realise more fully that we live by emotions, not by facts.

Especially is this true in history. We don't remember facts, or, if we do, we find them useless. Legends live, and rightly we resent all efforts to dispossess us of our precious heritage. Bruce and the spider, James Watt and his mother's kettle, 'Up, guards, and at 'em!' That's history. Newton and the apple, Stephenson and

experience led no further than G.P.'s daring, and that the mystery of the leopard woman must remain . . . for somebody else to fathom. The askaris could not understand why I refused to let them skin the leopard for me, and I don't blame them, for it was a perfect specimen and beautifully marked . . . anyhow, we left it where it lay.

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the coo. Einstein—never fear : he will have his legend by and by, his share of imaginative factless truth.

Woe unto the man about whose memory no legend clings ! He is doomed to oblivion. Do we remember anything about—say—Henry III ? Probably not. Yet we know that John lost his luggage in the Wash, and died of a surfeit of lampreys. There is no reason why we should remember these facts of his ignoble existence ; but they go along with the Great Charter, and there is every reason why we should remember that. When our ruthless new historians tell us that George Washington had no axe, no cherry tree, and little or no character, they rob us in the name of truth.

It is no service to humanity to rob us of our great men. Let us have more, until the day when we may all be great. My purpose therefore is to present another name for inscription on the roll of the illustrious. I feel it to be my duty. Yours is to decide whether the man is worthy of the honour.

He lived in the town where I was born. My father knew him. My grandfather worked with him, and knew him so well that he seems never to have realised the man's greatness. Besides, my grandfather was busy making money, and while he was growing rich, and richer, the great man was growing poor, and poorer. He died in obscurity, maimed, wellnigh forgotten even by those who had both known him and profited by his greatness. No fine street or square is named after him, no public memorial honours his memory. The centenary of his birth, and that of his greatest invention, passed without public notice in the place enriched by his genius. The mayor, putting the heads of his aldermen and councillors together, would be puzzled to tell you where the great man is buried.

A pity—more than a pity ! Shall we wax indignant, and say 'Disgraceful' ? Yet it is not a sin to forget. Shakespeare, Stephenson, you and I, we shall all be forgotten, sooner or later. The facts will go first ; the poetry will live long after they are forgotten ; for no matter how grand the hero and how noble his deed they must have a poet to record them if they are to be remembered. Poets don't peddle facts. Their work is to spin the magic yarns which are woven into legends and other durable fabrics.

Poverty, genius, romance, tragedy, the malice of enemies, the acclamation of enthusiastic crowds, fortune and misfortune—my hero knew all these ; yet he lived and died a man, and is forgotten. One touch of poetry, and he might have become a legend. You shall see how he deserved it.

Cornelius Whitehouse was born in the Black Country, before it was black, in 1795. Although James Watt had come to settle near Birmingham more than twenty years earlier, and his patent steam engines were used to raise water into the forge pools, the great helves in the forges were still worked by water power from the wheels turned by the streams flowing from the pools, and the horse gin supplied power for the coal and iron mines. There was no pall of smoke to shut out the sun's bright loveliness. The ill winds of war had brought prosperity over the district. A good workman in the gunlock trade made a pound a day easily if he cared to work. Most of them worked two days, and spent the rest of the week in drinking, bull-baiting, cock-fighting, without a thought for the inevitable misery to follow. Cornelius Whitehouse worked with his father at the gun trade, welding barrels.

Presently, however, they began to make swords, and in this trade our embryo inventor made the first guard hilt, the pattern still in use. The sword in the Duke of York's case in the armoury of the Tower of London was the handiwork of Cornelius Whitehouse.

His father was a man of spirit. On one occasion, during the busy times of the French wars, the old man took a number of sword blades to be viewed by a War Office inspector. The official refused to look at them, and when Whitehouse grew importunate he condemned them as rubbish. It was too much for the fiery old man, who saw his own good work rejected while lying before him was a consignment of inferior blades which had been passed. He snatched up one of his swords, and, forcing the rascally viewer by his threats to take up one of the blades which the latter had passed, he swung his own finely tempered sword, and severed the other at a blow. There was no further trouble when the Whitehouse swords were submitted to inspection. In fact, Cornelius Whitehouse was offered the position of sword-viewer to the Government, but he refused it: Waterloo had been fought, and the boom was over.

From swords to ploughshares—old Whitehouse and his children went into the edge-tool trade, spades, shovels, plantation hoes, and they worked hard, every one of them, his daughter even taking a hand in blowing the bellows. There is a record of young Cornelius's membership of a Methodist church choir. Wesley had preached heroically among the wretched workers of the district, and his good seed had brought forth an hundredfold. Maybe, however, Cornelius Whitehouse loved the music rather than the doctrine. He was passionately fond of music.

In 1819 the family settled in the most ancient town of the

Black Country, Woden's Beorh, the Hill of Woden. Still in the edge-tool trade, Cornelius worked at Wednesbury forge. The great pools which supplied the power from the water wheels to the hammers have but recently been drained. Grand skating pools they were in the hard winters.

Now at this time a valuable discovery was awaiting the man who could place it at the service of mankind. William Murdock, of Redruth, the discoverer of coal gas as an illuminant, had illuminated Soho with his gas for the rejoicings over the Peace of Amiens. But for years afterwards his gas could only be conveyed in heavy pipes of cast iron, much too clumsy, or in lighter pipes of copper or brass, too expensive to be practical. He had at first used musket barrels. Experimenters tried to make wrought iron tubes, and patents were taken out, but no progress was made. Not more than four feet of tube could be made at a time, and that by the costly and tedious process of heating in an ordinary blacksmith's fire, and welding on a mandril.

Cornelius Whitehouse had been brought up in the gun barrel trade. Indeed he was the only workman who has ever succeeded in welding a musket barrel out of Swedish iron. Moreover, he had the inventor's faculty of rearranging knowledge in new and unexpected permutations. Abandoning the blacksmith's hearth, he constructed a long hollow furnace, even the bricks being made to his own specification, in which he heated long strips of iron. Then, instead of using a mandril for applying his welding force on the inside, he rightly concluded that the weld could be made by applying the force equally and rapidly from an outside pressure.

He took out his patent in 1825. The manufacturer who accepted it made a real commercial bargain with the inventor, giving him thirty shillings a week, a cottage, and firing, for his invention and his services; and for seven years the poor fellow got little more. The patent process consisted in turning up the edges of a long metal strip until they nearly met. The metal was drawn at welding heat through a hole, in section a truncated cone. In passing from the broader to the narrower end of the hole the edges were compressed against each other and were thus welded together.

The commercial possibilities of the invention were obvious. Barrel and pipe forgers, thrown out of work by the new process, blamed the inventor for their misery, and threatened to take his life. So violent grew their animosity that Whitehouse slept with a loaded gun at his bedside, and actually used it, in self-defence, one night when he was awakened by the noise of a gang of men

assembled in his garden. When they attempted to force the door he fired a charge of small shot at their legs, and they fled.

The malcontents soon had the wit to see that the new process would bring them prosperity. Great extensions were made to the works, and hundreds of men were taken on for building the shops, the furnaces, and the machines needed to make the new forty-foot tubes. Hostility swung over to enthusiasm, and the crowd who had cried death to the inventor now paraded the streets with music, flags, and banners, in his honour. He was as little affected by one as the other, being entirely absorbed in his work, inventing new tools and processes to overcome new difficulties. Soon he had machines for screwing his long tubes together, and for making small fittings, elbows, tees, crosses, bends, to replace the cumbersome cast iron joints which at first he had been obliged to use. Trade rivals had already infringed unscrupulously on the patent in order to share the new prosperity, and Whitehouse's experiments had to be kept locked away from spies. The original screwing machine was installed in the upper storey of a private workshop, and the only entrance was by means of a ladder, which the inventor drew up after him. He had made the ladder of light tubing, and it was itself one of the wonders of the works. His first fitting makers were picked men, sworn to secrecy, and they were locked in the shop at their work so that no spies might see any of the experimental processes.

Early and late the inventor was at work, in his homely fustian suit and leather apron, happy as only artists and inventors can be, while other people made money. His ingenuity was extraordinary. His recreations seem to have been more inventions, his holidays all busman's holidays. He sealed a patent for making gun barrels at a single weld in an adaptation of his hollow furnace. Old friends who were barrel makers and forgers begged him not to commercialise the invention, for it would have ruined them, so he locked up his seal, forgoing all his rights, because he valued friendship more than money. He had probably lost interest in the invention, being already busy upon others. Inventions were his playthings. He invented a process for making exceedingly light barrels of Swedish iron; then he invented a new kind of chilled shot for which he made great claims; but the inventions were not commercialised. In fact, he loved his work, he lived with ideas, and so he remained poor. He lacked that love of power which sees money as a means to selfish ends, and that love of money for its own sake, which the vulgarly successful man mistakes for greatness.

So many trade pirates had had to be fought in the courts, and the costs of litigation had been so heavy, that the company applied for an extension of the patent. This was granted under Lord Brougham's Act, the judge adding the condition that the manufacturer should pay to the inventor and patentee—whom he called patronisingly the 'ingenious mechanic'—a royalty of £500 a year. This decision was celebrated in Wednesbury with flags, banners, bands, processions, the roasting of whole oxen and sheep, and other public rejoicing. Cornelius Whitehouse himself made the cannon for the celebrations.

Three years later he patented an important process for the manufacture of lapwelded tubes for locomotives. He was now at the zenith of his career. Prosperity, adulation, fame, had come to him, and he was still the same simple worker, busy day after day about the works, in his leather apron.

It is interesting to note that the town, growing so busy and prosperous, making tubes and money, had neither time nor inclination to think of using them. The Royal Commission which inquired into the sanitary conditions of the populous districts between the two cholera epidemics reported of Wednesbury: 'There is no drainage worth the name, no scavengers or system of cleansing, and the supply of water very scarce and indifferent. There are no pipes, few pumps, and the wells are often bad. The people complain much, and have to carry water near a mile, or to buy at a halfpenny for three cans.' Details followed which are too ghastly to be quoted here. Cornelius Whitehouse invented a special tank for his own supply of domestic water, and fixed it on his roof, to the envy and admiration of his neighbours.

The villain now appears, to the tune of 'When the cat's away.'

Whitehouse went over to Saint Denis, near Paris, to superintend the erection of the first patent tube works established out of England. If he had been superstitious he would have returned at once, for he crossed the Channel during one of the worst storms of the century. Before going away he had engaged an engine driver whose previous experience had been gained with a James Watt engine at a colliery. How Cornelius Whitehouse came to make such a blunder has never been satisfactorily explained. He trusted the man implicitly, allowing him to have a private key to the works, and even to have access to the most carefully guarded secrets, the inventor's own machines and tools. No sooner was Whitehouse out of the way than his engine driver informed the proprietor that Whitehouse was plotting to ruin the business. It seems to be a

stupid tale, but it must have been subtly conceived, and well told. Evidence in corroboration was soon forthcoming; increasing numbers of inferior tubes were rejected by the inspectors, and time after time the machinery broke down mysteriously.

The proprietor, son of the engineer who had recognised the inventor's worth, was no judge either of men or of mechanical processes. He had married an actress, and his hobby was the stage. Consequently, when Cornelius Whitehouse returned from France, and accused the traitorous servant, he had so little support that he left the works in a rage.

Disaster followed. He had saved money for years, being an abstemious man whose wants were few, and recreation his work. For his second wife he had married the widow of a gentleman, so thorough a gentleman indeed, that he had escaped from the clutches of a horde of moneylenders only by leaving the world altogether. It was quite natural, in an age of rapidly expanding industry, that the wealthy proprietor of the tube works should buy the hall of the impoverished gentleman and become the new aristocrat upon an estate which had been registered in the Domesday Book. The widow had a little property of her own. Cornelius Whitehouse therefore decided to set up in business on his own account. The enterprise was a failure, although he installed the plant himself, and added every improvement which his fertile brain could devise. His partners were inefficient, he himself had no commercial ability, and the only success of this unfortunate partnership was an excellent brass band. Cornelius Whitehouse loved music. An inventor and a musician—how could he hope to make money?

For some twenty years afterwards he worked with another manufacturer, near Wolverhampton, but he seems to have been no richer at the end of that time, when he left to erect a tube factory for a local ironmaster. Disaster, more sudden than before, struck down an ageing man. He had spent a great deal of his own money in this new work, taking the care and pride in it which he always did, and the cheque which he received in payment was dishonoured at the bank.

It is a sad story, but I must tell it to the end. A certain retired captain, having a little capital to invest, wished to put it into some manufacturing business, and he approached an old friend for advice. This friend recommended him to obtain the services of Cornelius Whitehouse—they were going cheap. He did so, and there remained only the question: what business should be bought? An old-established frying-pan factory was for sale in Birmingham. The

captain bought it, and Cornelius Whitehouse set himself to the task of making frying-pans.

He succeeded, naturally. He was impoverished, he was ageing, but his spirit was undaunted. The little factory, which had turned out frying-pans and suchlike utensils by the dozen, now produced them in tons. Fate smiled again. Here was prosperity, delight in good work done.

I warned you, though, it is a sad story. One evening Cornelius Whitehouse gave orders for the piston rod of one of the steam hammers to be packed. Probably the engineman blundered. Exactly how the misfortune happened is not known. The next morning, as soon as Cornelius put his left hand into the bottom die, the piston came down and smashed his hand into a pulp.

When he had lost his money he had not quailed, for he had not lost his happiness; his mind was clear, his thoughts his own, rearranging themselves to the novel patterns which are the delight of genius; and his hands were ready to shape these ideas in metal for everyone to see. Now, alas! he would never make another tool, never handle one. Workmen whom he had chosen and trained were managers, directors, and proprietors of works throughout the Black Country, councillors, aldermen, mayors, their great houses lording it over the drab rows of workers' cottages, while the inventor, to whom they all owed their prosperity, lay, maimed and forgotten, in hospital. During the sixteen weeks that he was there the marriage of the Prince of Wales was celebrated, and the broken old man looked out upon the illuminations which his inventions had done so much to furnish—Saint Philip's Church being outlined in flame, thousands of gas jets from thousands of feet of patent tubing.

He died on August 7, 1883, in his eighty-ninth year, a poor man and a neglected genius. He had led a sober and industrious life; he had enriched the world and his fellows by his talents; he was certainly a man of great kindness of heart, and beloved by all who knew him intimately; in fact, he did everything to deserve success, and failed to command it. *The Times*, in its special London Supplement for Lord Mayor's Day, did not mention him or his tubes in its historical survey of street lighting. Tubes were needed for gas: tubes grew. Their inventor is not remembered—no, not even in his birthplace, nor where he worked, nor where he died. Truly bread is not to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

THE LOST GARDEN.

BY LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR GEORGE MACMUNN, K.C.B.,
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EVER since mankind have searched for and pondered on the lost site of the Garden of Eden the finding of an old site that once was a pleasure has always filled souls with delight. And there are so many such places in the world to be found by those who look for them; some carefully tended, with ruins to match, so that they are not really lost, but only gone before. Others struggle with bramble and overgrowth unknown, a broken idol or an old-world fane amid the screen of creepers. I have met such round the world, and sometimes you find them in Ireland, lying to the soft wet west wind, looking through the mullion of what once was a chapel window, amid the saxifrages and old-world things grown wild.

The East is perhaps where they strike you most, especially since Lord Curzon has had gardens planted round all the famous ruins of the Mogul days, too tidy perhaps for their purpose, but before his conserving hand came eastwards, you might ramble alone among the ill-kept or forgotten *baghs*. The ruins and remains of Mogul gardens are the most fascinating things in India. They were great gardeners those Turkish and Mogul princes. Somewhere in Central Asia the garden cult had excelled, making use of mountains and streams and using for their purpose the fruit and the rose, the narcissus and the iris which grow wild. A Chagatai garden—Chagatai or Jagatai was a son of Ghingis Khan, who ruled in Turkestan, and the Moguls were really Chagatais (viz. Turks of Turkestan), as the countryside to this day calls them—relied not on its wealth of flowers, but on the beauty of its layout.

A few years ago chance willed that I should journey from the ancient bastioned city of Jammu at the Indian foot of the Kashmir Himalaya to Kashmir itself. But I was to have with me as furniture and recreation a newly raised mountain battery, formed under my supervision for the army of the Kashmir State. And we were to march to Gilgit, far away towards the tumbled mountains that lead to the Pamirs and the 'Roof of the world.' But as never a man had marched before, and few of them could even

girth up a gun mule, which is a feat of strength, we were going leisurely so that the men should learn, far from the haunts of men and troops who might jeer. Also we were going by a route that no one knew, across the great Chenab at Akhnoor, all under the slopes of the Pir Panjal, and then into the little principality of Poonch and thus on to join the great highway into Kashmir and thence up the snowy passes to Gilgit.

So we marched by way of stony country paths along the foothills, past here and there a castle, some still garrisoned and some derelict, till we came to the level of the lower pines, the *longifolia*. The length and breadth of the Himalaya you will find the grouping of accurate old Isaiah! The cedar, the pine, the fir and the box, *Cedrus deodara*, *Pinus excelsa* and *longifolia*, Norwegian fir, the *Abies Webbiana* and *Taxus baccata*, and no doubt many another. But first and foremost, as you leave the plains and the hot plain air you come to the *longifolia* amid the sandstone hills. Then as we marched we struck into the ancient way of the Mogul emperors when they journeyed from Lahore in May, as was their programme, right over the Pir Panjal, by a cobbled road which rises still to many thousand feet and passes out of the forest to the birch tree and the juniper bush close to the great glaciers, and then down into the Happy Valley of which Tommy Moore, who never saw it, sang so convincingly.

And the Moguls longed for their Central Asian gardens, and made them in miniature at every stage, and from Lahore to Srinagar is thirty-one stages, as they had made them at Agra and Delhi and Lahore as aforesaid; little walled *serais* with bastions round the garden, planted with peaches and plums, and with iris and flowering shrubs and little terraced rills and channels and fountains. When the hills begin then the Central Asian gardener could have his tiny waterfalls and fountains. Elephants and even guns, wives, eunuchs and courtiers tramped up and down these mountain roads, spring and autumn, for a century and more, for the great emperors with their sonorous Persian titles, since on the ascension to the throne their names left them. They sing themselves as they go. *Jēhāngīr*,¹ *Shah Jēhān*, *Ālāmgīr*, *Shah Ālūm* . . . intone them aright as you would a Kyrie! 'The World Holder,' 'The King of the Universe,' 'The World Encircler,' 'The Ruler of the World,' so let them go.

And their gardens, those in the great places rescued by a greater

¹ 'gīr' pronounced 'geer.'

World Holder, George Curzon, the rest left to the dragon and the bittern and to some toothless old keeper, too old to keep the ivy from displacing the carved stones in the summer-houses. Here marching from Jammu City to Kashmir we struck into the first by the old Castle of Rampur Rajaori on that good fishing river the Rajaori Tawi.

The battery camped outside the *serai*, and I went in to look and fell a-musing. The headman of the village brought me two gold coins in a handkerchief as *nazzar* to touch and to remit after the way of magnates, for was I not the supermaster of a battery of artillery and the only *Angrez*, for here they use the old forgotten name of the English, who had come this many a year? I found it all as Tavernier had said, the French chirurgeon of the Mogul, nearly three hundred years before.

It was a hot day, though within the lower hills, and there was little to do save spin for *Mahseer* in the Tawi and explore the garden. The pattern of the *serai* seemed to be sealed, for one had seen the high archway and the bastioned corners, with the umbrella-shaped awning in red sandstone, wherever the Moguls had built their pleasaunces. But this garden was on the side of the hill, and water from a canal could enter it. Down the centre came the long stone water-trough, and the series of cascades each cut in stone in a different pattern, so that the water should ripple contrariwise in the sunlight, and fill the round breast-like fountain tops long dry and silent. Gnarled old apple trees were still in blossom, and the almond tree flourished hard by the husk of an arabesque pleasure house. The iris and the Prophet's flower peeped out among the gentle *banafra*, the spring violets that all the world use as *tisane*. The little pink tulips abounded among the paths and narcissi in crowded profusion sprouted in the side channels, and squirrels chattered among the pilasters. I looked for the canal that should bring the water in and heard it gurgling outside, taking the clear hill water to the terraced wheat-fields. It was easy to dam it and to turn it into the garden under an arch in the wall. It pushed masses of fallen leaves along and made its way to the masonried troughs and the channels which lead to the stone cascades; at last it got room to move and opened out over the fluted stone. Then began the music of long parched rills and the water danced as it danced to the Mogul ladies. Beside me stood the gardener, toothless and doubled with age and rheumatism. One yellow tooth peered at me over a mouth so old that it was like a

rotten medlar, fringed with beard and moustache dyed red after the red hair of the Prophet.

'*Sahib*,' he said, 'it is forbidden, but who can compel the *Angrez*, though the Presence will certainly reward his faithful servant, who has not had wherewithal to smoke this twelvemonth,' and he fell a-mumbling that aforesaid he was a man and a king's servant and carried a matchlock in a red baize bag behind a potentate, and now had not even a *hukah* fill, and so forth after the manner of ancient mariners and gardeners all the world over.

So while the battery rested, and when the fishing had grown dull, I brought my camp chair to the *chabutra* and sat among the ruins and watched the apple blossoms fall and smelt the sweet narcissi and wondered, for—

' I love the cities to whose ruined walls
The ivied vesture of oblivion clings,'

and would fain have seen the Turkish ladies of the marching train disporting on the sides of those mountain ripples.

And so the day just frittered itself away and the soft breezes blew, till 'boot and saddle' called us on our way. Then at dawn we swung out, the jinketty-jink of the gun mules sounding on the *pavé*, whose large rounded pebble ways suited the spongy feet of our baggage camels. And we followed the ancient way for fifteen miles, till we came to the next stage, in a dark cool glen under a pine-clad hillside, above which towered the snowy peaks of the Pir Panjal, and against the green background I could see the great arch of the *serai*, but the modern camping-ground lay half a mile back from it, alongside a Moslem burial-ground, with iris growing over the tombs. My Moslem orderly rolled out the Arabic greeting '*As Salaam Aleikum ahl-i-kabool*.' 'Peace be with you dwellers in the tomb.' By a small white shrine a dozen bamboos carried the fluttering rags that pilgrims leave, and near it grovelled a leper, who joined his arm stumps and sought largesse, in a cry forged on anvils hot with pain.

Later in the day I strolled down to the *serai* to look for another tangled garden, and found outside it a Hindu shrine, of severe and very ancient style, standing by a sward of turf. Up and down the green walked the *sunnayassi*, the recluse in charge, apparently deep in thought, grave of mien and austere of countenance as becomes one who long ago renounced in seven years of novitiate the pleasure and the pains of this world. I accosted him humbly

and courteously, as a man should speak to a recluse. He halted in his pacing and looked at me a second, and then he bowed. I smiled at him, and a flicker of a smile played across his smooth lineless face in answer.

‘My son, what seek you?’

‘*Nahin, Baba!* I seek nothing, I but eat the air after a long march, wandering hither and thither without purpose, but I would enter the old Mogul garden that must belong to this *serai*.’

‘What brings you to the old garden?’

‘Curiosity, father, and a love for old places. Especially would I call to memory the times of the Chagatai, and see their courtiers and their ladies a-marching to Kashmir.’

The *sunniyassi* nodded and smiled to himself. ‘My son, you have spoken well. I too love to muse on things that are passed as well as on things that are to come. Perhaps I can help you in your quest. You will not find the garden by the *serai*. It is up on the hill, and the Chagatai put it there because of the *karez*, the water channel which runs out of the rock.’

‘Indeed, *Baba*,’ I replied, ‘if you could help me or tell me some legend of the place that would be a great pleasure.’

‘Come first with me.’ And he led me towards the little shrine, a shrine of grey limestone carved outside with a curious pattern, something resembling the rose and portcullis of the Tudor period. The entrance was through a high pointed arch, and the darkness within for the moment was unfathomable. And then my eyes slowly recovered from the numb of the outside air, and I could see that a tiny flat lamp, or *chirag*, flickered in front of an image. Then I saw that it was not the popular conception of Mahadeo, but the solemn, deep-browed Indra, another *persona* of the deity. The figure was cut of black basalt, dark and polished, and then the *chirag* flared as the *sunniyassi* dropped something over it. As it flared I could see the countenance of the carven image, and it was a countenance that bewrayed calm and peace on a road untold, far different from the more common Hindu figures. The stone eyes seemed to watch and to follow one, with a look that would penetrate one’s deepest thoughts. I looked at the *sunniyassi*, who smiled at me, and said, ‘That is the great Indra who knoweth and maketh all. Yesterday, to-day and for ever are but one, and could you but see as those eyes see, you would know all that you want of the garden of the Turks. Now look at me.’

And I looked, and he passed his hands in front of my face and the *chirag* flared again. Then we went out.

'Now I will take you to the garden.'

Above the temple a cobbled stairway led up the face of the hillside. And we climbed up, the Indian leading, on to a plateau which lay at the foot of a wooded hillside, and below me lay the dressed lines of the battery camp. Thus we came by a clump of pine to the *Kaiseri Darwaza*, the door of the Empire. To my surprise it stood in good order, complete in arch, and the polished plaster of marble surface intact instead of peeling. Over the inner gateway was a Persian inscription, and it was the inscription on the jasper inlaid entrance over the Hall of Private Audience in the Mogul Palace at Delhi. Here it is in its beautiful Persian :

'Āgār Fārdous ba rue zāmīnast
Hāmīnast! Hāmīnast! Hāmīnast!'

which may be translated :

'If there is a heaven on earth
It is this! It is this! It is this!'

The Chagatai were famous for their inscriptions, and were students and lovers of Persian poetry, as were all the cultivated folk of Central Asia. But written on the great gate in the tomb of saintly Salim Cheestie, in Akhbar's wonderful city of Fattehpur Sikri, that is now deserted, is a more wonderful one still. Akhbar would have founded such a religion as has been the despair of many great thinkers, that should combine the good of every creed regardless of the fact that no human mind could make the selection. But he culled what he could, and on the gateway of the Cheestie's tomb is recorded the following in that beautiful flowing ornate form of Arabic the *Khatta Kufi* : '*And Jesus said, the world is a bridge, you must not build on it.*' Pass over, and build not tenements as men of old built on London Bridge. There it stands a new message for Christendom, and for all the world, and now above me stood the words of different import, claiming that the garden within was a heaven on earth. And if you notice these things, you will see that the word used for heaven is *fardous*, not *behisht*. Now *fardous*, or paradise as the Greeks spelt it, means that thing of longing to Eastern potentates, a hunting park, a New Forest, while *behisht* is the real heaven of peace, not of the slaying of game. Of all the beautiful names in the East, this is given to the

water-carrier, the name that men so unthinkingly use, the *bheesti* or *bihisti*, the water-carrier, 'The man of heaven.' You can hear the cry going down the platforms of the railway station on an Eastern day in midsummer. 'Oh man of heaven, bring water.' You can hear Dives calling to Lazarus, 'Touch my tongue with water, I burn.'

And here above me was the promised heaven on earth, and outside the gate a *bheesti* with his leather water-bag sprinkled water to lay the dust.

So together the *sunniyassi* and I entered the garden and stepped on the soft green lawn, greener than even the lawns of Curzon the World Holder in Delhi. And up the centre was a row of Italian cypresses, and beyond, the marble trough with the fountain at play, I could hear the drowsy splash and the rippling of the cascades as we stepped on the grass. Who, I reflected, had so endowed this garden that it had never fallen to decay? Had Curzon been this way and made an edict?

But the recluse laid his finger on his lips and we walked on. Indeed it seemed that speech was out of place, the blossom shone in the morning sun, and its rays scintillated a hundred lights and colours from the ripples, the tall spangled poplars on the edge of the garden waved and whispered, and I caught a glimpse among the apricots of the goodly wings of the peacock. Not a sound save the murmur of the winds and the whisper of the water, and we came to a terrace and ascended steps by the side of steeper and more splashy ripples over stone that was cut in the shape of lotus and their leaves. Then as we looked came the sound of silver voices, the voices of women prattling, and six maidens came down a marble path by an upper row of fountains, lithe figures and pretty faces, with embroidered bodices of plum-coloured silk, little pieces of mirror sewn thereon which sparkled in the sun like the ripples on the cascade. Their arms and their bodies below the bosom were bare to the waist, and below were voluminous skirts of white muslin. And they were carrying crimson rugs, and two of them a crimson and gold umbrella. The rugs they spread at one end of the terrace where stood a small marble summer-house, athwart the channel above a cascade, and the umbrella they stuck in the lawn, for it was attached to a long gilt pole shod with iron.

As they spread the rugs and arranged the cushions, one of them struck the strings of a zither. The notes twanged across the rippling water, soft and sweet and restful. Presently they sprang

to their feet, and we heard more voices. Down the same path now walked a beautiful woman, clad much as the maidens, save that she wore above her bodice a shawl of embroidered muslin, and on her head a high cap of crimson, bound with a gold frame set with turquoise, the head-dress of a Tartar lady of rank. By her side walked a tall olive-faced man, with a black beard, and a small gold and white turban on his head. His dress was a long yellow gown on which were embroidered roses, and round his waist a crimson sash, in which was stuck a green velvet gold-shod scabbard containing a sword with golden hilt. Behind them two Nubian boys waved fly-whisks gracefully, as the royal pair walked, for royal I judged them to be.

'Is the Rajah of Poonch here?' I whispered.

'That is no rajah, my son,' replied the *sunniyassi*; 'that is Jehangir the Great Mogul, who passes to Kashmir, and with him is Nur Jehan his wife, the Light of the World. See, they sit.'

And then the pair sat themselves on the cushions in the summer-house, where a little balcony projected over the water which ran out on to the cascade. Behind them two more women followed with baskets of fruit, green mangoes and melons crystal cold, and laid them before them, while she that had the zither sang.

And she sang from the songs of Saadi that are written in the book 'With Saadi in the Garden,' so that we too sat and listened, hiding behind a cypress hedge so that we should not trespass, and as we listened I must have fallen asleep.

And when I woke the Emperor and the women were gone, and the *sunniyassi* said, 'Come home, *sahib*, for the sun is getting high in the heavens,' and we walked once more on the cool turf to the door. But the plaster had fallen from the gateway, and the arch was broken, and I turned round to the garden. The cascades and the fountains were there, but dry and choked with dust. The fruit trees were old and twisted, though ablaze with blossom still; the cascades were chipped and lichen grew in the crevices as it did at Rajaori; the poplars were broken and only barely alive, and coarse grass grew where the lawns had been.

The *sunniyassi* said, 'Thus it is, my son, that the pomp and power of Mogul are long dead, and there is little of what you seek. Many of the marble squares are stolen, and all is broken and desecrated.'

'But, *sunniyassi-jee*, where is the garden that I saw just now,

and the maidens, and Jehangir and his consort that you showed me?'

'I, my son? Not I! Perhaps Indra may have brought before you things as they were, for to him time is nought. Yesterday, to-day and for ever. Here it is as you see it now, though perhaps you may rebuild it for yourself.'

But when I got back to the camp I found the Dogra commandant of the battery waiting to see me. It was slightly overcast, there being a cloud over the sun, and the poplars in the gully ahead looked dark, and somewhat menacing for the moment, as the breeze sighed through them, and the ruined *serai* stood up a black mass.

'*Sahib*,' said the Dogra commandant of the battery, 'the men would like to march on this afternoon, and say they are quite rested and the mules are fresh.'

'Why, Khajur Singh? What is the matter? Don't they find this a restful place?'

'No, *sahib*, they don't. Saving your presence, they say this place is haunted. There are *boots*¹ about.'

Boots or no *boots*, I was a little inclined to agree with them. The place perhaps was not quite canny. There were plenty of beautiful spots ahead, and, as he said, the mules were all right, despite their novice drivers. So march we did.

An hour later we left camp. I rode over to the *sunniyassi* to say good-bye, for I had been attracted by his grave, kind face, and I told him we were off. He expressed no surprise and merely said, 'Peace be with you, my son. Don't dwell too much in the past, for it is all one with the present and the future, and the world is *Maya*, a delusion.'

At the foot of the path up to the garden I halted, gave my horse to my trumpeter and climbed, for I felt I must see it again. There it stood, with its broken arch and its tangled trees and shrubs, and its dead water-courses. A peacock ran across my front, and for the moment I thought I saw the green and crimson bodices of the girls. I forced my way through a couple of peach trees, knocking off the blossom, but all was silence. Then I turned to go on my way, but as I turned, was it fancy? . . . a zither seemed to twang softly behind the rose bushes.

Below me the battery was closing up and I slipped down the path and mounted. I certainly agreed with the men that we had better go.

¹ *Boots*: ghosts, spooks.

MODERN DIET REFORM.

BY DR. NORMAN PORRITT.

A HUNDRED years ago, in a well-known passage, Lord Brougham announced, 'The schoolmaster is abroad.' Had Lord Brougham been alive to-day he might have been moved to substitute diet reformer for schoolmaster. The diet reformer meets us everywhere, in the daily newspaper and the monthly magazines, on the public platform and in the privacy of the dinner table. Convinced that he alone possesses the secrets of health, and that what suits him will suit everyone else, he tries to force his doctrines and his foods down everybody's throat.

Those who disregard his precepts are stupid, ignorant, or worse. 'If,' we are told, 'it is generally recognised that by eating proper food and following normal physiological habits it is possible to avoid all the ill-health and disease so common among members of a civilised community, and to ensure health, vigour, and a happier life by obeying the laws of nature, it is obvious that those who persist in neglecting them are criminal wrongdoers.' As a platitude this may pass. That disease can be banished by healthy living is not borne out by experience. So long as man is mortal, disease will waylay him. Metchnikoff, Coué, Alexander Haig, and other world menders promulgated their panaceas for long life, and nature, in ironical mockery, carried each of them off before he had reached old age.

The ideal of the modern diet reformer is a return to a so-called natural diet. To him meat is anathema. It is a worse evil, responsible for more misery, than drink. Go back, he cries, to a natural diet of fruit, salad, whole-meal bread, dairy products and fish, and in support of his doctrines holds up the untutored savage as the exemplar of modern man.

Two questions arise: What is a natural diet? Are savage races healthier and longer-lived than civilised races? I have never been able to see why meat is denied a place in a natural diet. Animals, whether they be sheep or oxen, elephants or mice, are as surely products of nature as fruit and vegetables. Primeval man, if anybody did, lived in a state of nature. He was a hunter and lived on the products of the chase. The remains found in their

subterranean dwellings show that the early cave-dwellers, whatever else they consumed, ate animal food—shell-fish, crustacea, and the products of the chase. As has been said, they ate anything from a louse to the putrid carcass of a whale. Primeval man knew nothing of science. No diet reformer told him what he should and should not eat. An instinct he could neither explain nor repress led him to the whole field of nature, and he included the flesh of animals in what to him was a natural diet. The same instinct was never absent as man climbed the ages. The appetite for meat has descended to man through a long line of ancestors, and if some can repress it, it is with the majority as virile and unquenchable as when it was passed on to his successors by that child of nature, primeval man.

Noah believed that 'every moving thing that liveth' was to be meat for him. In the plains of Mamre Abraham killed and dressed a calf, and set it before his visitors, who ate it. Esau hunted for the venison that the soul of his father, Isaac, loved. The children of Israel, wandering in the desert, were meat-eaters. Their descendants, the Jews, following the same practice, have, until recent times, when they had not thrown off the shackles of their religion, been freer than the Gentiles among whom they lived from cancer, tuberculosis, and other scourges. That the Jews abstain from the flesh of certain animals, and take precautions to ensure that the flesh of only sound, healthy animals is eaten, does not touch the question at issue. The point that emerges is that the flesh-eating Jews are a healthy, long-lived race.

When diet reformers point to savage races as examples for man to follow they make the tacit assumption that savages do not eat meat, and that they are immune from the diseases of civilisation. The crave for meat is as strong in the savage as in his civilised brother. One has only to remember cannibalism, once universal among, and still practised by some, savage races. Whether cannibalism originated in religion, sacrificial rites, famine, or a belief that the virtues of the eaten pass into the eater, these excuses for it were soon lost in the overpowering desire for flesh meat. The cannibal believes that, of all foods, human flesh is the best. He wages war against neighbouring tribes to obtain it. He dries the bodies of the slain for future consumption, and drives the prisoners to the shambles, to be fattened and eaten. During its passage down the Congo the Stanley expedition was assailed at many points by natives desirous to obtain a supply of human flesh. Human flesh is sold openly in the market-places of savage

racés, as beef is in ours. Amongst the Niam Niam people human fat is on sale everywhere. Native races abstain from meat only when it is beyond their power to get it. When they can obtain it they eat it avidly. Diet reformers adduce the Sikhs, the Zulus, and other natives of South Africa as a proof of the advantages of a so-called natural diet. But the Sikhs eat meat when they can get it. My doctor brother, who has practised among them for many years, tells me that the natives of South Africa prize meat highly, and that when they can get it they desert their mealies and devour the flesh of animals ravenously. Others who have lived in Zululand and other parts of South Africa corroborate my brother's statement.

To trace the physical superiority of savage races to diet is to ignore their environment. The savage inhabits a land of sunshine, broken by tropical storms. Instead of being penned up in the sunless streets of crowded cities, with a pall of smoke to darken the sun, instead of being driven indoors for more than half the year by a chilly, damp climate, he lives in the open air, with the health-giving sunshine pouring down upon him. His black skin is his sunshade. He can bask in the open air when, to avoid sunstroke, the white-skinned pale face must crouch indoors. Sunlight multiplies the vitamins of the body. Combined with an open-air life it is one of the most powerful regenerators of health and physique, and does much to make good the deficiencies of an inadequate diet. This has been amply proved in artificial sunlight clinics. To take no account of the savage's environment and manner of life, and attribute his physique only to his food is to close one's eyes to what experience and physiology show to be a powerful element in the well-being of every man, civilised or savage. Cannibals are as fine specimens of the genus *Homo* as the races which subsist largely on a vegetable diet. Meat neither impairs their physique nor makes them more prone to disease.

The assertion that primitive races are healthier than civilised man has not been allowed to go unchallenged. Woodruffe states that 'all natives in the Tropics are in a condition of partial nitrogen starvation, and need much more nitrogen than they can get.' Nitrogen hunger is as imperious as oxygen hunger, and drives man to its readiest source, the protein of meat. The late Sir Percy W. Bassett-Smith had as wide a first-hand acquaintance with aboriginal races as any man. 'It is often stated,' he said, 'that the endemic population of tropical climates, under natural conditions, is free from dietary diseases so common in those living in temperate climates. This is only partially true. Intestinal diseases from the

consumption of unsatisfactory forms of food are very common. The same results are found in parts of Africa, Borneo, etc.' Sir Percy Bassett-Smith quoted with approval Ghosh's dietary for ordinary work in the Tropics. This contains, out of a total of 1,148 grams, 168 of meat.

Dr. B. Spearman, of Zanzibar, speaking after Sir Percy Bassett-Smith, said that after many years' intimate experience of primitive African tribes, he was compelled to dissent from the view that the primitive savage was the physical ideal to which they must look. A fine fellow physically, his resistance to infections was low. He was prone to suffer from coughs and 'colds' and more serious respiratory diseases, from ophthalmia, and indolent ulcers. Many of these peoples suffered from disorders due to food deficiency. In all cases the diets of different tribes were traditional, unvaried, and monotonous, and he believed they could be shown to be seriously deficient in accessory food factors.

Uncivilised man atones for his immunity from the scourges of modern life by other diseases. There is no evidence that the general health and longevity of uncivilised races are superior to those of civilised man.

One feature of an advancing civilisation is an increased consumption of meat. In 1850, in this country, the annual consumption of meat was 3 lb. per individual. Since then it has risen to about 50 lb. per head. If meat is a harmful, dangerous food, a holocaust of disease and death should have followed such an orgy of meat-eating. Yet, what do we find? That coincidentally with this increased consumption of meat the death-rate has fallen from 22 to 12 per thousand, and that the expectation of life is greater. In the words of Sir George Newman: 'Notwithstanding an enormous increase of the population without enlargement of the home territory, the total death-rate and the infant mortality rate have been halved within four generations, whilst the expectation of life of a child born in this country to-day is seventeen years longer than it was for a child born in 1846.'

The war, among other things, was a vast experiment in maintaining the health of large bodies of men. Never were troops better fed; in no previous campaign was their health so good. A contributing factor to the health of our fighting men was a liberal supply of meat. A large part of our enormous debt to America is for meat from the canning factories of America. Dr. Manson, Medical Officer to the Runcorn rural district, was struck during the war by the healthy, well-fed, and generally improved appearance of those

men on leave, whom he had previously known in civil life. 'The men had put on weight, they looked in rude and robust health, and as they themselves expressed it, in the colloquialism of the day, "were in the pink"; the same phenomenon showed itself during the rapid demobilisation of the armistice. After the lapse of a year it was painful to observe a distinct deterioration in their physical condition. Many had lost their ruddy appearance, all had lost weight. One may assume,' he concludes, 'that the most important factor of all in the changed appearance above described has been that of food.' The men, unable to afford the meat ration of their army days, deteriorated. The war was a dietetic experiment on a scale big enough to be conclusive. One of its lessons is that an adequate supply of meat supports health and vigour, even in the hardships of a strenuous campaign.

Meat supplies to the system, probably to the blood, a life-giving element. Before the cause of beri-beri, the disease which afflicts the rice-eating populations of the East, was known, it decimated the Japanese navy. The chief medical director of the navy checked the disease, not by providing unpolished rice, but rations of meat. The meat supplied something missing from the diet and the systems of the Japanese sailors, and reduced beri-beri from a scourge to a sporadic disorder. In like manner, a ration of meat cures pellagra, a disease common among the maize-eating populations of Italy, Southern France, and Spain.

It has, however, been left to two American doctors to furnish what is, perhaps, the most striking example of the benefits of meat. They have found that the intractable and hitherto incurable pernicious anæmia can be cured by feeding the sufferers on liver. Their results have been confirmed by British physicians. Liver, an animal food, supplies to the system of the anæmic one something which, to use a common expression, makes blood. It replenishes the missing corpuscles, starts the production of new blood, cures the disease, and restores the patients to health. It is not stretching comparisons too far to conclude that flesh meat exerts a similar action.

Some years ago the British Medical Association investigated the diet and habits of old people over eighty years of age. One characteristic was observed in the more than seven hundred old people of whom particulars were obtained. They were all meat-eaters, showing that meat promotes the vitality which carries a man to longevity. Centenarianism is increasing. Inquiry would show that centenarians are meat-eaters. Will anyone be so bold as to affirm that the addition of a ration of fresh meat to the diet of

unskilled labourers and their families would not be followed by the same benefit as accrued when meat abolished beri-beri from the Japanese navy?

Meat has been arraigned as a cause of cancer. Those most familiar with cancer, those who have probed most deeply into the cancer problem, declare with one voice that diet has no share in the production of cancer.

'Various articles have been impugned, tomatoes, fresh meat, salt, and many others,' says Sir Berkeley Moynihan, 'but there is no evidence that would satisfy a scientific mind that these or any other articles of diet, in excess or abstinence, play any specific part in causing this disease.' The memorandum on cancer issued by the Ministry of Health states that 'it cannot be asserted with scientific authority that the use of any particular articles of food increases the liability to cancer or prevents it from appearing.'

Cancer occurs in vegetable-feeding animals, and attacks children below the meat-eating age. It has been observed in infants not six weeks old.

The Ministry of Health instituted an inquiry into deaths from cancer in religious communities, the members of which live under strict dietary rules, involving more or less complete abstinence from meat and rich and abundant food. The investigation showed that previous statements on the freedom of monks and nuns from cancer cannot be substantiated, and that cancer is as frequent among the male and female members of these religious orders as among the general population of the same ages. Drs. Copeman and Greenwood, who analysed the figures for the Ministry, complained that they had to devote their energies over a long period to the investigation of 'assertions supported merely by the vague pseudo-statistical evidence which is customarily cited respecting the rôles of certain articles of common consumption in the genesis of cancer.'

The comparative freedom of orthodox, meat-eating Jews from cancer has been mentioned, and until the believers in the cancer-producing agency of meat substitute proof for generalities and pious opinions, their case must be held to be non-proven.

The structure of man's body confirms the conclusions drawn from his history and instincts. Man's teeth and digestive organs bear the marks of both a carnivorous and a herbivorous ancestry. They show that he is intended and fitted to consume a mixed diet of flesh and herbs. He has the canine teeth of carnivorous and the grinding teeth of herbivorous animals. But his grinding teeth, instead of being lumped together, like the teeth of the herbivora, are

separated from each other. Their shape and arrangement in the jaw resemble those of the hind teeth of the carnivora. Man does not chew his cud like vegetable feeders. Vegetable feeders have rudimentary or no collar-bones. Man, like flesh-eating animals, has well-developed collar-bones. His stomach conforms to the carnivorous type. Many vegetable feeders have a second stomach, non-existent in the carnivora, and present in man only as a rudimentary vestige.

There is not one universal diet, suitable and acceptable to all. The difference is seen in families. John must have a liberal allowance of meat, and turns up his nose at the sweets and puddings Dick relishes, whilst Henry, unlike his brothers, glories in an abundance of fruit. Likes and dislikes are not fads and fancies. They are the expression of the needs of different constitutions, according as the carnivorous or herbivorous strain from remote ancestors predominates, and are as varied as stature, the cast of the features, and the colour of the hair. Turning from individuals to races, one finds that in the tropical East rice, and in sunny Italy macaroni, form the staple diet. In temperate climates more meat is eaten, until one reaches the Arctic regions where blubber and fat alone supply bodily needs. Climate is a clue to a people's food, as it is to their drinks. In southern France, Italy, and Spain, light wines are drunk; coming north to Germany and England, beer is the national drink; still farther north, in Scotland, Norway, and Russia, whisky and vodka take the place of beer. To try to tie down races of men, or the individuals of which they are composed, to one diet is as reasonable as to make them wear the same measure of clothes.

One cannot but admire the good intentions and approve the objects of the diet reformer. The promotion of health, the prevention of disease, the prolongation of life, and the conversion of a C3 to an A1 population make a universal appeal. Everyone should be ready to help on the good work. No one will deny that an excessive consumption of meat is injurious, but that should not blind us to the lessons to be drawn from man's ethnology, history, habits, instincts, structure, and physiology. The broad as well as the long view of dietary needs is as essential as it is in other things. As Dr. Cowell remarks: 'There is a real danger of the public being led astray by the half-truths that are being served out to it by the lay Press and by commercial advertisers. Practical suggestions that may be offered by responsible advisers may differ considerably, and yet all rest on some sort of scientific basis.'

THE SPARROWFIELD PAPERS.

BY F. H. DORSET.

NO. 5. MY FRIEND 'MRS. DAILY.'

ALONG the opposite side our road they are dumping orderly heaps of bricks, and already the concrete foundations of three new houses have been laid and scaffolding poles are up. Soon rebellious buttercups will have vanished and there will be a row of trim little houses and prideful gardens like our own. Behind them, peeping over their roofs, Mr. Mussel's orchard will still stand, however, stubborn outpost of unconquered fields . . . until somebody makes Mr. Mussel the satisfactory offer he is waiting for.

If the Man with the Pipe and myself were true to our principles we should rejoice to observe so many new satisfactory homes for worthy families springing up about us, and the spirit of the Old Suburb, still hardly reconciled to the creation of Sparrowfield in hey, presto! standardised efficiency within twenty-four months, would have no part in us. But because we are human, and (secretly) because of Mrs. Bland-Mocking, we mourn our fading view. We were in the 'bus first, and these new-comers have no right to squash us, even if it is raining outside. Besides, since our builder finished us he has had one or two new ideas, and is incorporating them over the way in his last batch of building, which is aggravating and makes us envious.

How queerly small the newly marked area to be covered by a house always appears! From our bedroom windows the foundations of these coming houses look like chicken-runs, and it is almost impossible for the lay mind to believe that over each limited patch will arise six rooms and a bathroom, described in the Estate Advertisements, without *too* great a stretch of imagination, as 'spacious.'

We certainly do not require as much elbow-room as our grandparents, and fifteen feet supplies us with a space equivalent to their twenty, because both our clothing and our furniture are less ponderous. We run a good deal to windows, and we keep them open and clear of flower-pots. On the edge of the Sparrowfield Estate stand certain grave substantial villas built as the last word in middle-class modernity in 1852, and their rooms and porches

were raised for crinolines. Just behind them lay, in those days, a farm and fields, separating them from the rest of the Old Suburb, but piece by piece this has been built over, and there are houses of the 'sixties, 'nineties, and early nineteen-hundreds jostling them. The 'sixties are largely yellow brick and plaster, mathematically square, with flat sash windows and high flights of steps; the 'nineties favour a ruddier brick and little square bay-windows (still sashed), surrounded by a trimming of yellow cement, the whole effect suggesting pressed beef and yellow fat: the early nineteen-hundreds are hurriedly picturesque, with brown balconies, overhanging eaves of red tiles, casement windows, turret-rooms, and a general air of small French châteaux mixed with German domestic architecture, which is odd but not unpleasant. Then you come to us of the New Suburb, much less pretentious and all painfully alike, yet attractive with our mixed brick and rough-cast, untortured gables, rather deep roofs of pale pinkish tiles, and general air of artful simplicity.

My friend 'Mrs. Daily' can tell you all about the domestic working of each type of house. She has been in service, either permanent or 'daily,' with families living in each kind for most of the fifty working years of her life. She is sixty-five, and began her pre-ordained career at fifteen, 'as soon as mother could spare' her. She then received six pounds a year, and worked from 6 A.M. till 9.30 P.M., with one Sunday afternoon off a fortnight. That was in 1878, and sheer domestic revolution has taken place since then.

The race of 'charwomen,' like mothers-in-law and landladies, has suffered injustice. Almost invariably you find the 'daily' in literature depicted as a figure of incompetence, illiteracy, and insobriety, dishonest, but perhaps washed a little by sentimental pathos. Granted a percentage of such ornaments of their profession (own sisters to the Sairey Gamps of sick-nursing), the fact must ever remain that such a portrait is libellous if applied to the remaining bulk, and probably has had no little to do with the alienation of the modern young woman from 'helping' as a vocation. 'Charlady' having become a term of contempt, I will not apply it to my much-respected household assistant. There is no need for such as her to assert their personal pride by means of sham gentility or gin. They have earned their laurels, and I am glad that my Mrs. Daily, at any rate, has survived from the era of the basement staircase, and all the other innumerable stairs of her pilgrimage, until she has emerged into an age of non-basements and vacuum cleaners; a

little hampered by varicose veins (earned in the Old Suburb), but full of human wisdom. She has two daughters in service and two in business, and her review of the household history of Great Britain is sound. In her opinion our recent foretaste of Armageddon was not an unmixed tragedy. It ended in 'ladies' having to do their own housework, and they found out what it meant, and the immediate result was an effort in the direction of the ideal home, and the dawn of day for the daily help and the cook-general.

'It was all right,' she explained to me yesterday in the chat which always closes her weekly 'day' with me, 'when you got into service in an 'ousehold that kept a big staff. We each 'ad our job then. But when you was a general to people as 'ad been brought up used to servants, and then married poor and couldn't keep more nor one or two and yet wanted things nice, *that* was when you found the shoe pinch. Keeping things nice meant such a lot more than it do now. Let alone the stairs, meals was so 'eavy and work so mucky in them basements. Even right down to 1914 there was frills on everything, and you only found labour-savin' devices in the expensive 'ouses. Do you remember them "undies," ma'am, all covered with lace and threaded with ribbons—"frou-frou" they called 'em when there was stiff silk on top and lots of skirt? Laundryin' them wasn't no joke, and they was just typical of where we'd all got to in our 'ouses. All very pretty, but servants was getting more difficult, being better educated, and you wanted three to any decent-sized 'ouse. And people didn't dare to be different from their neighbours. You 'ad to 'ave your fluffy petticoats even if you was obliged to get 'em up yourself on the quiet because of laundry bills. Of course some ladies *did* do a bit of their own work, but they 'ad to make out that they didn't if possible, and in any case the 'eavier work that we did was a lot 'eavier than it is now. My Ruby and Joan wouldn't be in service to-day if things 'adn't improved. They'd have gone into business, like the two younger, and they'd 'ave bin right. But business was 'arder for the shop-girl in my day; I don't know reely which was the tryingest. I 'ad mistresses more'n once that I got reely fond of and who tried to save me legs a bit, but takin' it all round there was a 'eap of needless work to do that could 'ave been saved if custom, so to speak, 'adn't demanded it.

'When munitions and war-work come along that drew the girls off, and now everything 'as to be labour-savin' and wages good to get 'em. Consequence is ladies 'as learnt things, and when a girl

'as the sense to go into service now she's got a self-respectin' job. But it'll take 'em some time to be convinced of it, and the country's be'ind the town in some things, and the dole, that's done some 'arm, no doubt. Still, goin' out by the day's a lot pleasanter than it used to be. I'm stickin' to Sparrerfield now, I am. I can tackle that, varicose veins or none, and it's friendly-like.'

Sometimes 'Mrs. Daily' calls me 'ma'am,' as in the good old days when the one-horse shay had to look as much like a carriage and pair as it could; but more often she uses my married name, respectfully in the sense of politeness. On the whole I prefer it, for she works well and we are comrades-in-arms rather than a commander-in-chief with an army of one.

If only she will continue to pay me her routine visitation and her legs won't let her down, I am more than thankful for my 'Mrs. Daily.'

No. 6. POLITICS.

It is significant that, while Red Socialism is decidedly unpopular at Sparrowfield, and we are all upholders of modified capitalism in some form or other, our general sympathies are inclined to tend towards Labour. We are annoyed about the demoralising influence of the dole, complain with faint bitterness of the difficulty in obtaining domestic help, and condemn with one voice the paid agitator; but we are secretly convinced that unless somebody extreme keeps on pricking the body politic into activity, it will always contrive to slumber peacefully upon the uneasy bed of unreformed abuses—the Housing Problem, for instance.

The Housing Problem appeals to us profoundly. We know that we ourselves are the lucky ones, very minor capitalists, but still able to pay deposits and secure houses wherein to raise the family which house-shortage and birth-control have threatened so seriously. We know that there are countless others, among them many of the bricklayers and lower artisans who have raised our dwellings for us, who are still crowded into small rooms and unwholesome tenements, where the men-folk can find little comfort at the end of the day's work, and where the women struggle to preserve health and decency against odds surely unnecessary. So 'Housing' and 'Playing Grounds for Children,' no less than 'Hospitals' are slogans that always stir our suburban hearts. We ourselves are still too closely kin to the toiling multitudes to forget the nature of its problems.

How we shall all vote at the next election it is difficult to forecast. The Conservatives have disappointed us, but then so have Liberals, Socialists, Labour. Short of Bolshevism, we are inclined to suspect a queer unity of inertia between all these parties. They all talk, and they all do a few tactless things with trade which give us the jumps, because our jobs depend largely on commerce, and always about them hover forebodings of a coal strike. One thing is noticeable when we happen to be gathered together and the conversation becomes casually political; even our Labourites are disposed to regard Protection with friendlier eyes than of yore, and even our Conservatives tolerate criticism of pet fetishes with good humour. The truth is that we are none of us able to become whole-hearted Party voters. Our sympathies have been extended to boundaries unknown, or very dimly sensed, by our forebears. Our present avocations in trade or business carry beneath them memories of strange contacts with other lands and peoples, with social grades both upward and downward not ours by birth. When your milkman, by origin the son of a Council schoolmaster, has sat by right of rank in the officers' mess and shared in the fatigues and mysteries of Mesopotamia, he is not, and never can be, a mere milkman. Once he meant to be a schoolmaster in a Secondary School as much as he meant to be anything, but warfare diverted his line of education. Now he is the servant of a company which has managed to syndicalise even cows, and willy-nilly he is studying social life from yet another angle. What he really thinks he is inclined to keep to himself, but when he comes to your doorstep on the morning round you greet him as a friend, conscious that he once commanded several of your relatives.

The blessed word 'Mesopotamia' draws together many of our males on the Sparrowfield Estate. We have also a naval contingent, now employed in jobs which are not even remotely associated with the sea, and quite a large leaven of Engineers, Masters, and Extra-Masters, for whom, strangely, our vital Merchant Service cannot find employment. Free Trade seems to benefit the shipping industry in a somewhat peculiar fashion. Or does it? At any rate why should an Extra-Master be compressed into a News Agent? He is not adapted to it, and his life is a continual harassment between his customers and delivery boys, who forget to deliver papers at the correct houses. And a large Limited Liability Company is slowly edging him off the map. Can you wonder if he is a little soured and wants to know why the British Mercantile Marine should not only

serve to import foreign produce but also to employ foreign sailors ? According to him, a mystic region named 'the Beach' is almost entirely peopled with Extra-Masters, the shores of the British Isles are strewn with Extra-Masters' tickets. I've tried to cheer him with a humorous story about a relative of my own who was a passenger during the war upon a ship torpedoed by an enemy submarine, almost robbed of her lifebelt when in the water by a Lascar from her own boat, and, after being rescued and resuscitated, developed German measles.

It is quite true ; but it doesn't seem to amuse him. He says, leaning across his counter and absently looking for *The Observer* among a stack of *Tiger Tims*, 'What we're all suffering from in England to-day is too much hot air. It's hot air all the time, and no method in what they do, and sometimes playing at business, while a few wide-awakes are filling their pockets at Britain's expense. We want statesmen, not politicians, and we want practical men who understand their job and attend to it.'

'Yes,' I agree, and extracting my *Observer* myself from a pile of penny novels I pay my twopence and go home thinking.

What *does* lesser suburbia really feel about politics ? There is a note of cynicism in our voices whenever we mention the speeches or doings of politicians, which somehow sounds ill-omened. The hot partisanship, conviction, idealisation, of past years is no more. Heroes in public life seem to be awanting, and that is scarcely a wholesome symptom. God-worship, hero-worship, the bold word and the broad stride, faith in one another, and the humility which the cynic never knows, are these things wanting in us ? God who guards all little brick houses forbid it !

Better be a Jingo and beat a drum.

In pre-war days suburbia in general was the breeding-ground of that casual idealistic Englishness which, tinged with sentiment, might be a trifle laughable, but nevertheless filled 'Kitchener's Army' at the instant call and fed the sap of Flanders poppies. It produced shopmen who were able to turn into soldiers within a week or so—soldiers capable of meeting the Great Grey Trained Army of Germany and holding it back ; also, a little later and more wistfully, it learnt how to sing 'Smile, Smile, Smile !' and that war-song of the hearth, 'Keep the Home Fires Burning.' To-day, it is to be feared that our Englishness is less casual, a little less idealistic, rather distrustful of exploitation, inclined to suggest that, in the event of the League of Nations failing to curb warlike tendencies,

might not a holocaust of politicians be a better method of settlement than a holocaust of young men, or those bombs from the blue which may wipe out half a civilian population? In short, ours is a questioning mood, and our attitude of mind is full of queries, for the war which ended ten years ago served to join the internal social questions already troubling us to other questions universal and international; which brings us back to our milkman, and the twist on his lips which is not wholly humorous.

He is by early adult experience pre-war. Therefore he has lived through it all, from 'Tipperary' through 'Smile' back to the 'Home Fires.' He would probably do it again if needful beyond dispute, but first—as with a Party vote—he would ask 'Why?' and someone would have to produce a sound reason shorn of sentiment.

It is in this atmosphere that our war babies are growing up, but is it an attitude that human nature will ever permanently retain?

(To be continued.)

GETTING GOLD.

WITH THE DRYBLOWERS IN WEST AUSTRALIA.

THE actual getting of gold has ever exercised a fascination over the mind of man, and in his day-dreams enchanting visions of lands of golden sands cheered him when the sordid things of life pressed sorely upon him. The Land of Gold of the dreamers who lived about five hundred years before the letters 'A.D.' became a feature in the chronology of the world seems to have had a definite geographical position in the region now known as Northern Rhodesia, and there are evidences which indicate that King Solomon obtained from this quarter much of the gold which gave him his glory.

Probably, Central Africa and the fertile land now designated the Sahara provided gold for the needs of the Carthaginians and Romans while those mighty empires fought for supremacy, but 'A.D.' had registered nearly sixteen hundred years before another tract of earth surface was discovered that could appropriately be termed a land of gold. This was the Eldorado Island of the Spaniards and it lay in a vaguely defined zone in Central and South America. During the period following the discovery of America, gold became an element that loomed large in the dreams of England's daring sons. It abounded somewhere beyond the setting sun and to find it adventurers sailed out into the western mists. The sword was more effective in their hands than any mining implement and the temples and stores of accumulated treasure on the Spanish Main were Eldorados to them. In time, laden with gold from the mystic lands of the New World, English ships, storm torn and war shattered, would battle up the Channel and the joy bells of Plymouth and other southern ports would ring out a welcome to the returning triumphant gold seekers.

What the lordly Spaniards thought is quite another story, but they endeavoured to put an end to Englishmen adventuring overseas by sending an Armada to wipe England from the map. That famous Armada 'gainst her bore in vain the richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts of Spain.' Its fate is told in history, but one of its treasure ships, the *Florentia*, was left at the bottom of Tobermory Bay and, preserved deep in the silt worn down from

the mountains of Mull, it is supposed that cases of golden doubloons still lie. Perhaps they do. Treasure-hunting expeditions with diving gear and other scientific appliances provide the season's attractions in Tobermory annually, but the writer has reason to believe that his ancestors made themselves the possessors of the *Florentia's* gold two or three centuries ago. They were not true to type if they failed to do so!

The time machine ground out another two and a half centuries, and then the discovery of gold in California made the Pacific slope the Land of Gold. The hectic days of 1849 have been told in song and story and, in the opinion of many, were the cause of plunging America into the rushing stream which has carried her on to her present greatness. Soon afterwards, South Africa and Australia attracted the gold seekers of the world, and later, in 1897, King Gold sent forth his imperious call from the Arctic Circle, and the frozen Yukon became the Eldorado of the world. Ontario, in Canada, and Tanami, in North-west Australia's blistering sands, next broadcast their golden attractions and thus heralded the present day.

The British Empire had already become the chief gold producer of the world, for it seems that her sons had retained the adventurous spirit of their forefathers, and none who will not venture need look for gold. Those sons knew that the precious yellow metal existed in other countries denied to them, and although they, ignoring boundaries and evading hostile patrols, penetrated the forbidden lands and brought back gold, they could not hold the auriferous ground. Thus, the enormous golden deposits of ex-German East Africa and New Guinea were not spoken of in public places at the time the discoveries were made, and only recently, because the fortune of war has made both German East Africa and New Guinea British, has the world become aware of the land of gold through which flow Edie Creek, the Bulolo River and other tributaries of the Markham River, in New Guinea, and the other Eldorado among the mighty ranges on the south-eastern shore of Lake Tanganyika, in East Africa. The world's goldfields of the present day are therefore exclusively British, and the Call of Gold sounds as alluringly in the ears of the various members of the Anglo-Saxon race to-day as it did when it drew forth their ancestors to the Spanish Main.

And to-day there is as much adventure as ever on the golden trail, but the sword plays no part in it. On the latest goldfield in New Guinea firearms are perhaps a necessity, but only for shooting

game. The untamed cannibalistic head-hunters who dwell on the great plateau shut in by the Owen Stanleys and the cloud-piercing Razorback Ranges are an intelligent people among whom the writer and his comrades have lived without ever firing a shot in self-defence. They ask only that their tapoo laws may be respected and that the white men will refrain from forcing their particular religious views upon them; and the gold seekers, not usually having any theological ideas which do not agree with their own, in some way, do not trouble themselves about details of those beliefs.

Wherever gold is found its actual finding gives to the prospector a brief thrill of exquisite joy. The nervous system is shocked into a state of paralysis, which causes a feeling utterly beyond the power of any man to describe.

And gold can be found almost anywhere. The writer has found it in Scotland. It is in the waters of the ocean. It is in the sands of the Sahara desert. Alaska and South Africa afforded the writer the thrill of a find, as also did New Guinea, New Zealand, West Australia and Queensland. Any man can find gold, alone and unaided, but the methods of finding are different almost everywhere. In Klondyke the frozen, pebbly wash of the creeks must be thawed before the gold can be extracted by 'panning' or other methods. In New Guinea, it has been collected, up to the present, by 'riffles' or wash-board-like structures and other primitive devices, in all the rivers and creeks, but already the very latest and most improved forms of extracting plant are in course of being carried over the Razorbacks to the golden sands of the plateau by aeroplanes. The sands of some creeks the writer and his comrades worked when the country was German are now daily yielding over one hundred ounces of gold to the ton of sand.

In New Zealand, a land of hidden gold formations, the precious metal is sluiced from its conglomerate deposits by high pressure water power. In Queensland it is still 'panned out' from the streams, or dollied by hand and machinery from the quartz reefs containing it, and in West Australia the single miner can find it on the surface by 'dry-blowing,' if he does not care to sink a shaft on the chance of striking the reef which sheds the surface gold. 'Dry-blowing' is the simplest method of finding gold, and the gold obtained is—without luck—exactly in proportion to the physical energy expended in shovelling the sand through a series of sieves, shaking them, and blowing away the sand which passes through them by a bellows attachment. The complete contrivance is known

as a 'shaker.' The gold, being too heavy to be blown away, remains in the ledges of the shaker, and is collected in dust form or—with luck—in slugs and, possibly, nuggets.

On the goldfields of West Australia to-day there are many thousand of independent gold seekers. They keep far away from the towns of Kalgoorlie, Boulder, Nannine, Cue, Menzies and other centres where the ceaseless thud of stamp batteries and the short, sharp stroke of steam-driven air-compressors tell that big limited companies, with head offices in London, Melbourne or elsewhere, are mining gold far beneath the surface, and, forming camps on auriferous sand patches, extract gold by dry-blowing. When they exhaust or become tired of one place they fold their tents like the Arabs and silently depart for other parts with a speed that would tax the Arab to emulate.

All kinds of men are found among those communities, and although some never have been anything else than dry-blowers the majority are real adventurers who find in the golden quest a solace for all the worries which attend man's life in all other professions. Some may make a fortune and leave the land of stunted scrub and sand with the idea of spending it in more favoured places, but they always return. Once any man has responded to the call of gold he must ever after hear the silent summons sounding in his ears, and sooner or later he will again answer it. . . .

It therefore need not be explained how it came about that I found myself once more in the little galvanised iron township of Nannine. I had arrived by rail but, when I had left it last, many years before, the railway terminus was at Cue, fifty miles to the south. I asked a few questions in the hotel the night of my arrival, bought a horse, and packed away my garments of civilisation for possible future requirements, and next morning rode out on a nor'-easterly track in search of Eldorado. Two camel teams were also setting out for some distant goldfield of which I had heard sensational news the previous evening, and as I rode past the laden ships of the desert another rider cantered up alongside me. He was a pleasant-faced individual with the far-away look in his eyes that proclaimed him a son of the bush.

'Good mornin', mate!' the stranger greeted. 'Makin' for the new show?'

'I'm not particular. What's it worth?'

'Well, I heard some fellows back in town tellin' a famous mining man who got in by train from somewhere last night, that nuggets

were lying on top like flies in condensed milk, and he swallowed it.'

'The milk?'

'No, the yarn. Those London Johnnies never believe anything that is the straight-out truth, so they've got to be told something that isn't the truth before they will believe any story.'

'What was the mining man like?' I asked. I had not seen any mining engineer of note in the hotel.

'Oh, he was about your size an' was dressed like the bad man in the pictures. His face, though, looked as hard boiled as your own.'

'Thanks, I didn't know I was so very tough looking.'

'Oh! you're not nearly so hard like as some of my mates. You should come out an' see them if you're not particular where you go.'

'Thanks again. I'll maybe find my way out your way some-time; I suppose you are working on this new discovery the people in Nannine are excited about?'

'Mate, that new discovery is a darned blind. There isn't any new discovery that I know of. One of my mates invented the yarn so as to keep the mob from rushing the rich little sand patch where we are dry-blowing, out about two days' hard riding from here. He dreamt that we got our gold on a salt pan called the Sixty Mile Flat, about twenty miles over the ridges to the north of our camp. I'm not very good at telling yarns but, luckily, my mates have got the story of the new place spread so well that I wasn't asked if the gold I have just been into the bank with came from there. Everyone knows the Sixty Mile Flat.'

I looked back towards Nannine. A buggy drawn by four horses was in sight, and the two helmetted men dressed in white it carried seemed, even at the distance, strangely familiar.

'I have heard of that side-tracking trick before,' I said, memories of Queensland coming back to me. 'But I fear it won't work this time; you are being followed. Look back!'

'Howlin' kookaburras!' ejaculated my friend, as he looked over his shoulder. 'It's a rush! There are riders, an' cyclists, an' buggies an' sulkies in that mob comin' after us an', like enough, all Nannine is following on in the dust behind the camel teams. Mate, what should I do?'

'Ride back to town and let the people following you now go where they like; West Australia is a free country.'

'I can't, mate; I'm carryin' the camp mails an' I'm late already;

I stayed in town last night to see a picture show. Mate, I don't know you, nor you me, but are you game to come with me ?'

'I am—I want to see that imaginative mate of yours.'

'Then we'll give the crowd something to follow. Come on.'

We spurred our steeds and galloping across the open plain soon reached the fringe of the scrubby bush which lay ahead. I felt a strange thrill run through me. This was the glorious old life again, and I had leaped into it while still within sound of a locomotive's whistle. It mattered little to me where I was going, for the untrodden wilds were the home of my choice. Soon the sombre mulga scrub grew denser and closed in on the track we were following and, in about half an hour, not even the sound of the nearest buggy wheels crunching over the hard sand behind us could be detected. We knew, however, that our tracks could be followed readily, so we rode on as swiftly as was wise in the knowledge that we had to nurse our horses. In places we were able to ride alongside each other, and during those opportunities we slackened speed and talked in disjointed sentences.

In this way I learned that my friend's name was Dave Nelson, known among his friends as Honest Dave, and I told him the name by which I had been fairly well known when last in West Australia.

About noon we reached a long line of blue gum trees growing on the banks of a billabong (water channel) which Dave said always carried water and, riding down its banks into the fluid, we carefully made our way along its channel at right angles to our former course. Our care was not necessary to hide our tracks but was essential so that we should not disturb the myriads of parrots and other creatures slumbering in the shade through the hottest hours of the day. If unduly alarmed their chatterings along our route would give away our trick, and the fresh pads of kangaroos and emus starting away from the water would show that we had cut their line. Dave was skilled in bushcraft, however, and, somewhat to his surprise, I also showed that the game of throwing followers off our track was not new to me.

At the end of the long waterhole we dismounted and lunched on the contents of a tin of bully beef and some johnny cakes we baked in ashes and, just as the shrill cries of some families of gilau parrots at the other end of the tree-fringed pool announced the arrival of the first of our followers, we set off again along a kangaroo pad leading south-easterly off the main track. We did not again see or hear anything of riders, cyclists or buggy, and at sundown

we camped by a hidden native well, which we easily discovered, in the heart of a range of low scrub-covered hills. I was stiff and sore but I was happy.

Next day we rode less strenuously, now following Dave's tracks when coming into Nannine, and late in the afternoon we suddenly began negotiating patches of freshly overturned sand, and were just on the point of bursting through the scrub on to a bare plain which I could already see ahead when Dave announced that we had arrived in Last Chance camp.

'But where is the camp?' I asked, as we dismounted. 'I see nothing but heaps of empty jam, milk, and beef tins, and bottles.'

'You'll hear plenty in a minute.' Honest Dave laughed. 'The tents are hidden under bough shades all around you, and the boys are likely cleanin' up after their day's work an' don't know yet that I've got in.' He placed two fingers in his mouth and whistled, and before the echoes had ceased reverberating the bush seemed to produce a man in belted trousers and open-shirt neck from behind every dense clump of scrub.

'Yank out the news, you bold bad mail carrier!' cried one of the men. 'Has anything happened in the weary old world?'

'Were you held up, Dave?' queried another, as Dave attempted to speak. 'Did you bring out any papers with competitions in them?'

'Who in thunder have you brought along with you, you telescope-eyed dream?' roared a voice that awakened memories in me.

'Mates!' cried Dave, looking at the last speaker. 'This fellow is my friend an' if there's goin' to be any arguin' about him comin' here with me I'll, I'll——'

Dave's dire threat was never expressed, for, as several men came forward to assist in unsaddling our horses and to receive letters which Dave had brought out from Nannine, the man who had been rather rude in his reference to me suddenly leaped to my side and began gesticulating in an extraordinary manner, evidently striving, meanwhile, to express himself in words, but utterly unable to do so. His attitude was alarming, and all gathered round us, interestedly.

'Sing it!' yelled someone; 'you'll burst if you don't.'

'Take no notice, stranger,' another man advised, addressing me. 'He always gets like that when anything excites him greatly.'

I smiled and grasped the stuttering man's hand. 'I'm not a

ghost, Dick,' I said, 'and I'm so glad to meet you that I cannot find words to say how I feel, myself.'

But my old comrade, Wolfram Dick, was now himself again. 'You long-lost dream!' he roared, shaking my hand energetically. 'What wind blew you here? Where's Mac and Big Sam and the Professor——?'

'I heard a story of a new discovery, in town, Dick,' I laughed, 'and it reminded me so much of another yarn I once heard in Queensland that I thought the authors must be the same, so I came out here with Honest Dave to see. I don't know where any of our old mates are, but if that story gets caught up by the newspapers they'll also know where to find you.'

Wolfram Dick chuckled, and then, turning to the assembled men, introduced me as an old comrade of his in other parts of the world. He extolled my supposed virtues and doubtful accomplishments to such an extent that, had it been possible, I should have blushed, and at once I was at home among twenty men who were very similar in appearance to members of other camps I had known on the opal fields of New South Wales, on the New Guinean gold-fields, and in the silver-lead country of North Queensland.

'We are very pleased to have you among us,' said a tall man of thoughtful countenance who seemed to be a sort of chief among the others, after Dick had exhausted his vocabulary. 'We are just ordinary dry-blowers, but I hope you'll find us half-decent fellows.'

I did. . . .

Last Chance camp was much like other dry-blowers' camps scattered throughout West Australia. Most of its members were men who had at one time followed other professions, but few ever spoke of their pasts. By shovelling the sand of the desert through a 'shaker'—the one essential possession of the dry-blower—each man easily collected more gold than was sufficient for his requirements, and if any reason arose for his desiring more he merely worked harder or longer. The 'shakers' were weird contrivances built by their owners of split saplings or wood from discarded cases, and, in parts, often tied together with string instead of being nailed. The chief parts of each were three sieves of varying mesh mounted above each other, slantingly, on a four-legged, springy wooden framework which allowed of the whole being shaken.

The light sand and stones which did not pass through the first and coarsest mesh when the structure was vibrated rolled down

the slant and fell clear of the machine, and all the heavy material, such as ironstones and—possibly!—nuggets, were caught in wooden bars fitted transversely across each sieve, gravitation preventing such from jumping over the ‘riffles.’ The lower screens collected material that had passed through the first and saved the gold in the same way, but everything but the fine ‘flour’ gold was blown away from the last and lowest sieve by a bellows arrangement actuated by the movement of the shaker.

The men worked in couples, one shovelling the sand on to the top sieve and the other keeping the shaker in jerky lateral motion by the application of his physical strength. Periodically, the operators ceased work and examined the riffles, any gold found in the top riffles being carefully collected and stored in a bottle, while the gold dust from the lowest was picked up by a moist feather and likewise stored. The Last Chance workings were perhaps on a richer patch of sand than most workings elsewhere. At any rate the sand was highly auriferous and each couple of workers earned about two ounces of gold during the period they worked each day.

Each man lived in his own tent or in a bush shelter and, though most did their own cooking, some had combined to make this work less wasteful of time, and took turn about at being cook for their comrades. I joined this party and found myself in company with my old comrade Wolfram Dick; the Captain (the man who had officially welcomed me, and who had been a Pacific Island trader at one time but had lost his ship on a reef); the Poet (a curly-headed youth whom I thought I had known before on the opal fields of Whitecliffs in New South Wales, but who gave no sign of recognition); an individual known as the Oracle, because he could answer any question asked him; Bruiser Bill (an ex-prize fighter whose real name was unknown), and a man called Old Radium, because it was supposed he had been a science master in some college at one time and was always looking for signs of what he termed radio-activity in any specimens of ore brought in from the ridges around. ‘Pills’ (a doctor who had got into trouble) and two other men who, probably, had been honest ordinary gold seekers all their lives, also sometimes joined our group for meals, but all the others—and they included men who had wandered everywhere between the Poles—assembled around our camp fire at night for social intercourse. I shared Wolfram Dick’s tent and partnered him in dry-blowing the sands for gold, and my horse joined the other horses of the camp to feed on mulga leaves, salt bush and any

tufts of coarse grass that could be found within a ten-mile radius. The horses came into camp every night for water, which was drawn for them from an old shaft sunk by prospectors in the early days and into which all the rain that fell in the vicinity was diverted by small surface drains. Water was a very scarce commodity in Last Chance camp! By the end of a week I felt as though I had been a dry-blower all my life, and Dick and I, working together, were as happy as in the days of old when we were prospecting in parts of the world where our rifles were used oftener than any mining tool.

But my comrade and I had always been original in our ideas—often the originality was all that could be said for them—and one day, after having worked in a poor patch of sand, we conceived the idea of building a shaker which would travel through the sand instead of treating only the sand shovelled through it. We knew from past experiences elsewhere, however, that inventors did not receive much encouragement from their companions, so we kept our intentions to ourselves and appropriated parts of derelict bicycles, empty kerosene tins, discarded cases and nails wherever we could effect deals with the owners—or otherwise! and borrowed everything in the shape of tools any man possessed.

Thus, during the second week, Dick and I were ostensibly building a bush hut intended to be my home and in making furniture for its embellishment. But the bowery structure was thrown up in a few hours and the ant beds which we had collected and carried in to form its flooring were used in the building of a forge instead. Nearly every man in the camp offered to help us and we were hard pressed in inventing reasons why we did not desire assistance. We joined the camp fire circle every evening, however, and sang songs, told stories and generally did our share of entertaining with an air of men in whom there was no guile, and no man knew—at least we thought so—that afterwards we worked hard in shaping, filing, and fitting strange objects in position that they were not originally designed to occupy, half way through the night. We completed the weird-looking travelling shaker late one night on which some horses had been kept in camp in readiness for two men to ride in to Nannine with our accumulated gold in the morning and, as we sat in the candle-light inside our hut and eyed our creation, the same thought must have occurred to both of us, simultaneously.

'We'd be the better of a couple of horses to haul this affair through the sand,' said Wolfram Dick.

'We might be able to push it over the surface ourselves,' I reasoned, 'but I doubt if our combined strength would be enough to keep it moving with the propeller scoop digging into the sand, and the sieves and bellows working at the same time.'

'The horses are in now,' suggested Dick. 'We might harness a couple to it and haul it along in the darkness. We don't need to see how the thing works and we could leave it out in the sand, maybe, a mile from here and bring the horses back. In the morning we could go out and get any gold it had collected——'

'All right,' I agreed. 'Have a look round the tents and see if all the boys have turned in; we'll have a trial run, and if it doesn't work we can smash the thing to pieces and bury it in the sand where we leave it.'

Dick looked out into the darkness. No tent showed any light and we could hear the bells of the hobbled horses quite near. Luckily, our hut was about a hundred yards distant from the nearest tent, and Old Tom who lived in this was a very sound sleeper. Dick stole forth to investigate further and I gave a last look at the thing which we hoped would cause a sensation. It was really an ordinary shaker suspended between four cycle wheels. Cranks on the shaft on which the rear couple were keyed imparted motion to the sieves and a bicycle chain drive from a sprocket on one of the front wheels (the ordinary rear wheel of a bicycle) drove a sort of propeller which was meant to scoop up the sand as the machine moved forward and throw it on to the top sieve. Another chain drive from the other front wheel operated an adapted bellows which Dick had borrowed from another man's shaker. The sand would pass through the sieves in the ordinary way and be left behind as the contrivance progressed and any coarse gold would be caught in the riffles, while the fine or 'flour' gold dust would be collected in a receptacle under the last sieve. But the whole structure seemed rather fragile!

Dick soon returned and reported all clear, and a few minutes later we had caught a couple of horses and muffled their bells and, after pushing the shaker out of the sheltering hut, we harnessed them to it by means of ropes attached to the front axle. It required considerable manœuvring to steer the machine, but we managed to pull it clear of all camp obstacles and trees, and when well out from the last tent and—as we thought—beyond the range of sound, let down the scoop and slipped the actuating chains on the teeth. The shaker had been in silent movement all the time

because, not having facilities to make anything but the crudest appliances, we had fixed it direct to the rear axle crank without any releasing clutch. There was no moon, but the starlight was more than sufficient for our purpose and a good bit more than we desired.

I saw that everything was right and Dick stood by the horses' heads awaiting my signal to start. He was not excited in the slightest but I experienced a sensation that I had often felt before, and revisualised some scenes in New Guinea and Queensland in which my so-called original ideas had brought trouble.

'Let her go!' I called out, and next moment a noise like hail falling on an iron roof, and a blinding blast of sand in my face told me 'she' was going! There were other sounds, some suggestive of a rusty lawn mower at work, some like that of stones clattering in metal pails, but above them all rose Dick's voice in a crisp, soulful ejaculation which was not pious, and then I realised that I was standing alone and that the shaker was tearing up the surface of West Australia in a mad charge in the direction of the South Pole.

'What's wrong?' I cried, but received no answer and, as the cloud of sand rolled away in front of me and disclosed Dick's figure running after the uncanny contrivance, it dawned on me that the strange sounds had frightened the horses, that they had broken away from Dick, and that we should be the most ridiculed men in the country in the morning. I ran after Dick and soon re-entered the swirling sand cloud and lost sight of him, but the awful clanging, shrieking thing which was creating the stinging sand-vortex still raced ahead and I knew that Dick would follow until he overtook it or dropped in the attempt to do so. Perspiring, choking and blinded by the flying dust I ran on, and presently heard Dick's voice ahead. He was uttering words of a peculiarly Australian nature, although I have heard somewhat similar expressions used by men in the Old Country when under stress of deep emotion, but just as I gained his side a crash as of splintering glass rang out in front and in the sudden silence that followed Dick's flow of eloquence also ceased and the cloud of sand cleared away.

'It's all over now, old man,' I said sadly. 'I hope the horses are safe.'

'It was my fault, mate,' Dick responded. 'I never dreamt the jigger would kick up such a din or I should have had proper harness on the horses. Howling snakes! we'll have to sit up all night inventing a yarn to tell the boys.'

'You're good at that game anyhow,' was the only answer I could make, and walking forward in the track of the thrown-up sand we came up to the overturned monster we had built. To our amazement the horses were still attached and were standing still, gazing round mutely at the object they had been running away from, and unhitching them, we led them back to camp, hobbled them, and, unmuffling their bells, left them among their companions at the old watershaft.

'I wish to-morrow were over,' remarked Dick, as we turned into our bunks in his tent, and I felt much as he did, although it was dawning on my mind that the entire camp had slept through all the commotion which, after all, had been a good distance away.

At sunrise Bruiser Bill and the Captain saddled up and rode away with the camp's gold, and Honest Dave and a man called Bovril, for no reason that I knew, set the rest of the horses free. Dick and I watched the animals walk away with considerable interest.

'Don't say a word, and we'll dodge out to-night and bury the thing,' Dick said to me, and, marvelling that we were likely to escape just ridicule so easily, I agreed to the sentiments he expressed.

At lunch that day Old Radium was somewhat excited, and on my asking what was on his mind he said, 'My name will yet be famous throughout the world; look at this!' From a recess in his garments he produced a small piece of rock which looked to me like ironstone.

'But you are famous here now,' smiled London Joe, a man who worked on his own but who had been invited to dine with us because the Poet had prepared a mysterious stew which, somehow, had not come up to expectations yet had to be eaten. London Joe was admittedly the camp leader when the Captain was absent.

'Do you know what the Curies discovered?' went on the scientist, ignoring London Joe's remark and gazing lovingly at his specimen.

'Radium,' replied the Oracle. 'They extracted it from pitchblende in 1898.'

'Pitchblende is an ore carrying uranium oxide, and this piece of stone in my hand is a specimen of another oxide of uranium ore much richer in radium than pitchblende. I found a reef of it yesterday afternoon in the ridges to the south of this camp and did not get home until early this morning. Think of what my discovery means, boys; a gramme of radium is worth twenty thousand

pounds and the same weight of gold is only worth about five shillings.'

In an awed silence Old Radium handed round his specimen, but it did not impress anyone. I examined it with a pocket lens, scratched it with my knife blade and tried to look wise, but I did not know what it was and finally remarked that the stone looked like a piece of decomposed copper ore, which it certainly resembled.

The Oracle here began to explain that the ridges mentioned were fragments of the oldest tract of the earth's surface and that some billions of years ago they were flaming mountain peaks. He doubtless would have given us much more knowledge of the time when radio activity was a feature in the forming of the world out of chaos had not Wolfram Dick interrupted and asked Old Radium if he had noticed anything unusual near the camp when coming home in the morning.

'Nothing that would interest you,' the man of science answered, curtly. 'Certainly it was strange to see a willy willy (local sand-storm) howling along during the night but, nevertheless, one passed me less than half a mile from the camp and it was the noisiest willy willy I have ever heard.'

'Night ones are always noisy,' grunted Dick, 'I remember once over in Queensland——'

'Isn't it about time that the camel team got out with our stores?' the Poet broke in, irrelevantly, but to my relief, for I feared Dick's eloquence. 'It left Nannine four days ago.'

'The Captain and Bruiser Bill will hurry it on when they meet it,' said Honest Dave, and shortly afterwards all went forth to continue their dry-blowing operations.

As Dick and I walked over to the patch of sand on which we were working, the Poet joined us.

'What did you mean by butting in about our stores?' I asked. 'You know the camel team is not due until to-morrow.'

The Poet eyed me strangely. 'I thought I was doing you a good turn in side-tracking Dick,' he said. 'You see, I was walking about in starlight last night, and when I saw that noisy willy willy starting I remembered an inventor sort of fellow I knew on the opal fields who was just about your size. He didn't like being laughed at——'

'Oh! then you can come with us to-night and help to bury the cause of the willy willy,' I laughed. 'I thought I had met you before.'

The Poet said he would.

Before sundown, London Joe came over to us as we were shovelling sand through Dick's old shaker. He watched us for a minute or two and then observed casually, 'It's a pity we can't make a thing like that old shaker to travel through the sand itself—'

'Oh cut it out!' interrupted Dick. 'Did you see us, too?'

'Well, yes. The Captain and I were discussing whether or not we should tell the Nannine people that we never were near the place where they think we are getting our gold and—well—we saw you leaving your hut. Your machine seemed to work all right.'

'Oh yes, it worked all right,' I exclaimed, a bit annoyed, 'but it couldn't dig up all West Australia at once so it went on strike.'

'Truly typical of Australia,' Joe laughed. 'I saw it out in the plain this morning; the propeller struck the top of a covered reef and—I think you should have a look at the riffles in the sieves before any of the boys begin monkeying with the thing.'

London Joe's words seemed to hold a hidden meaning and, giving a shout to the Poet to join us, he, Dick and I walked towards the spot, about a mile away, where our wonderful travelling shaker lay. Its track was easily followed and we marvelled at the amount of sand it had shifted in its hurricane journey. When we reached it we found that its course had been checked, as London Joe had said, by the propeller's scoop having hit a reef of quartz, the cap of which lay only an inch under the surface. The impact had thrown off the chains, twisted the front wheels and overturned the machine, and when the noise of the flying sand had ceased and the horses had felt the sudden strain they had at once stopped. One look at the fracture on the reef face where it had been struck made us gasp in amazement. The gleaming white face showed tiny specks of gold! The odd contrivance had justified its existence, after all!—and I was happy.

We lifted the twisted framework back into position and I straightened the wheels on my knee, but the chains would not now fit and the shaker crank rod was broken. The wheels would now turn, however, and we four men pushed the disabled sand shifter back towards camp. Only then did I observe a great fault in its construction; we had built the body rigid on the four wheels and it could not steer! Before we had travelled a hundred yards all the men in camp were round us—apparently all had known of our secret work!—and the rattling assortment of wheels and cranks

was practically carried in to the watershaft. There, all stood around admiring and criticising the makeshift devices we had used in our great attempt to sample the sands of West Australia wholesale.

'How much gold did it collect in its mile journey?' suddenly asked a man.

'Darn my senses! I forgot to look,' ejaculated Dick, and I thought of that matter for the first time, also.

In the fast-falling darkness the sieves were examined by all the men who could crowd round them and, in a silence most eloquent, London Joe lifted from the lowest riffle of the top one a two ounce nugget and half a dozen slugs, each weighing about half an ounce. The Poet took from the lower sieve a handful of smaller slugs, 'weights' (pennyweights) and 'pin heads,' and the Oracle lifted out from the final receptacle over an ounce of pure gold dust.

The camp celebrated that night! . . .

Three days later, the Captain and Bruiser Bill returned, having ridden hard all the way. 'There are over five hundred men in the new rush to the Sixty Mile Flat where we said we got our gold,' the Captain cried as he dismounted. 'A reef has been struck which promises to be the biggest thing in West Australia and it has been traced in this direction for over twenty miles. It dips under the surface then, but the Government expert says it continues and, if so, it must pass near here. Wolfram Dick has been awarded three discovery claims for having found it!'

'We've found this end of the reef, Captain,' said London Joe, quietly, and Wolfram Dick began prancing in speechless frenzy, as I had seen him on my arrival in the camp. It must have been a novel sensation for him to find that his imaginative tale had come true!

'But I thought the rushers were following me?' I put in. 'I thought *I* was the mining man whom the people of Nannine tried to interest in the Sixty Mile Flat. Honest Dave and I diverted them from here.'

'The rushers went after Professor —, the Government expert,' said Bruiser Bill. 'He arrived in Nannine about the same time as you, and set out after you in a buggy but lost your tracks at a water hole. He's in town now and there's a big Scotsman with him. But he's going down to Perth to tell the Government he thinks that there is radium in the country——'

'It's our old mates, the Professor and Mac!' yelled Wolfram

Dick, finding his voice. 'The horses are in, and the boys can have the reward claims for my lies.'

'We'll see you again, some day, boys,' I said. 'Dick and I are riding for Nannine to-night.'

'And me too!' cried the Poet. . . .

That night ride was a feat reminiscent of old times, but three disreputable looking bushmen (I did not collect my garments of civilisation) jumped into the coast-bound train as it was leaving Nannine next night, and the joy of the two elegantly dressed gentlemen already in the carriage on seeing them was not feigned.

The new goldfields north-easterly of Nannine are causing a sensation to-day; but I believe I can make some improvements on the travelling shaker when next I return to the dry-blowers of Last Chance camp.

ROBERT M. MACDONALD.

LITERARY ACROSTICS.

THE Editor of THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE offers prizes to the value of at least £3 to the most successful solvers of this series of four Literary Acrostics. There will also be consolation prizes, two or more in number: the winners of these will be entitled to choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue. And, further, every month a similar prize of books will be awarded to the sender of the correct solution that is opened first.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 67.

(The Third of the Series.)

'He fought Plassy, spoiled the clever foreign game,
Conquered and annexed and Englished!'

'I get to sing of love, when grown too grey
For being beloved.'

1. 'The spit of sandy rock which juts
Spitefully northward.'
2. 'From the —— light she carries
Drops a careless bud.'
3. 'Some unsuspected —— in the far seas!
Some unsuspected —— in far-off seas!'
4. ' —— owns no equal, says
The bye-word, for fair women.'
5. 'You will wake, and remember, and understand.'

Acrostic No. 67 is taken entirely from Robert Browning's Poetical Works.

RULES.

1. Only one answer may be sent to each light.
2. Every correct light and upright will score one point.
3. With his answer every solver must send the coupon that is printed on page x of 'Book Notes' in the preliminary pages of this issue.

4. At the foot of his answer every solver must write his pseudonym (consisting of one word), and nothing else. His name and address must also be given, and should be written at the back.

5. Solvers must on no account write either the quotations or the references on the same paper as their answers. It is not necessary, or even desirable, to send them at all.

6. Solvers who write a second letter, to correct a previous answer, must send the complete solution as they wish it, and not merely state the desired alteration.

7. Answers to Acrostic No. 67 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE, 50A Albemarle Street, London, W. 1, and must arrive not later than March 20.

ANSWER TO No. 66.

1. S	no	W
2. O	ctavi	A
3. L	eande	R
4. D	ea	F
5. I	tali	A
6. E	arlie	R
7. R	ac	E

PROEM: Scott, *The Lady of the Lake*, i. 31.

LIGHTS:

1. Campbell, *Hohenlinden*.
2. Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, iii. 2.
3. Hood, *Hero and Leander*.
4. Milton, *Samson Agonistes*.
5. Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, iv. 42.
6. Tennyson, *A Welcome to Alexandra*.
7. Cowper, *John Gilpin*.

Acrostic No. 65 ('Smell Sweet'): Answers were received from 209 competitors, and 196 of these were entirely correct. The first correct answer that was opened came from 'Gezira,' who wins the monthly prize. Mrs. Moreton Dodd, Coverley Court, Cheltenham, Glos., will choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue.

